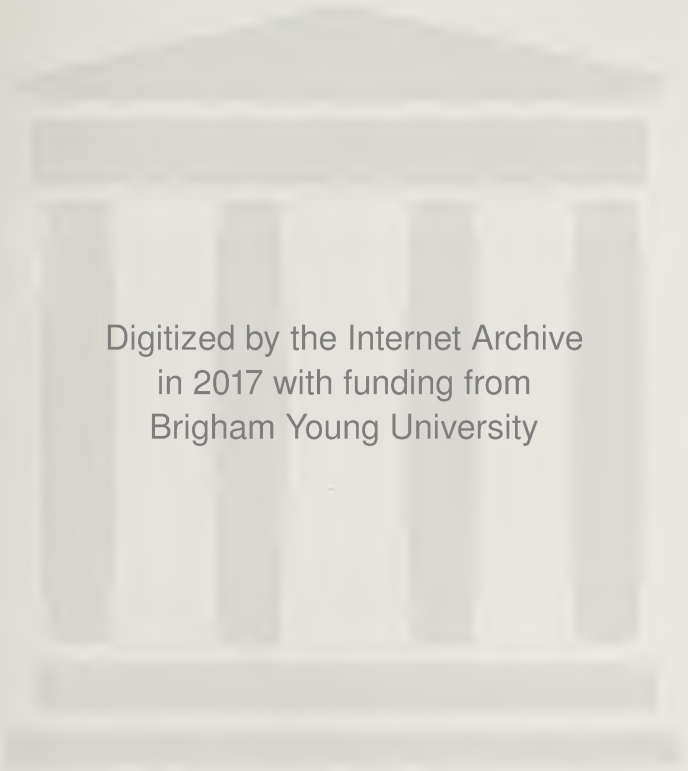


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HOW I FOUND THE CAVE OF THE WINDS



*Being the True Story as Set Forth
by the Discoverer*

GEORGE W. SNIDER

Press of Carson-Harper
Denver, Colorado

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Foreword

A WORLD-OLD fascination hovers about the subterranean haunts of old Mother Earth, and wherever one of these mysterious caverns has been opened up to the view of man, there will be found the ubiquitous tourist craving a new thrill, a new use for the string of superlatives with which he has been storing his active mind during many sightseeing trips in the wonder places of the world.

Now this Colorado of the Spaniard, this "ruddy, red-colored land," among its many wonders that have long made it a mecca for the tourist, can boast one of these underground caverns that is a very miracle of loveliness; at once calling into play the tourist's very choicest stock of superlatives. He finds here that Nature has been riotously extravagant in her lavish decoration of the entrancing chambers that extend in their devious windings for nearly a mile into the interior of the mountain, heightened in their wild beauty by the brilliant illumination of the myriads of electric light bulbs modern science has contributed to intensify the glories Nature has produced.

It is a satisfying adventure to the sightseer to be conducted through these subterranean grottoes by the efficient guide who points out to you the accumulating wonders of the Cave; but a rarer treat than this is to have for your guide the veritable discoverer of the cave itself.

This unusual experience fell to the lot of the writer while making an extended stay in the Pikes Peak Region, where, by chance, the discoverer was revisiting the scenes of his great find from which he had been long absent.

To have had from his own lips the story of his discovery, and the exciting adventures connected therewith; to have had each step of the way pointed out with its accompanying tale of hair-breadth escape or thrilling delight as each new wonder revealed itself, was to the writer the very pinnacle of romantic adventure.

The wish of the explorer to perpetuate in print the true history of the finding and naming of the Cave of the Winds, and to set forth in orderly sequence the several deeds, affidavits, letters and other documents verifying the truth of the tale, led him to relate to the writer the story herein set forth.


JEWEL FOUKE.

Colorado Springs, Colorado, September, 1915.



Yours Truly
Leo W. Snider

How I Found the Cave of the Winds

T was in Akron, Ohio, in 1867, that I, George W. Snider, learned my trade as a stonecutter and carver, being but 16 years old when I first took up the task. It was an arduous calling, but by dint of close application and untiring energy, I soon became an expert, and was able to compete with any worker in the trade anywhere in the Middle West, having met and defeated in open competition the best stonecutters in that region.

I was the acknowledged champion of my trade, but the strenuous labor involved began to tell upon my health, and my thoughts were ever turning to the far West where I might seek my fortune in a less laborious fashion; where opportunities were unlimited. Eventually I heeded the injunction of Horace Greeley to "Go West, young man, and grow up with the country."

Thus it was that I was the first of nine brothers to break away from the old home back in Ohio and come out to this Eldorado of the West in search of adventure, and to tempt the favors of Dame Fortune.

The western part of Colorado was first my goal, but it was a time of great unrest among the Indian tribes of that state, and the warlike activities of the Utes, and more especially the now historic Meeker massacre, drove me from that section and in my wanderings I came to Manitou in the fall of 1879, where, attracted by the great natural beauty of the place and the prospect of getting plenty of work at my trade of stonecutting, I remained, and in time became identified with the various activities of the little colony, serving on the Town Council and occupying the important post of chairman of the water committee when the question came up of supplying Manitou with its own water supply.

Because of my being fully convinced as to the utility of French Creek as the only source of water supply and knowing that Colorado Springs was after it, I hastened to file on the water in my own name for domestic use for the town of Manitou. Because of this and of my confidence in the engineering ability of Mr. L. A. Pease, and the practical knowledge of Contractor Wm. Frizzell, and also my belief that the system could be installed for \$40,000 instead of \$80,000 or \$82,000 that other estimates called for, I was appointed Superintendent of Construction, and led the project to a successful conclusion in the face of grave doubts as to its practicability.

I had my part, too, in the promoting of the Cog Wheel Road up Pikes Peak. I had been sent up to Denver as a committee of one to confer with the officials of the D. & R. G. R. R. Co. in regard to our summer advertising of the Pikes Peak Region. At this conference Mr. S. K. Hooper, the General Passenger Agent, broached the subject of a Cog Road up Pikes Peak, saying that such a road would be very advantageous to the company, in that it would attract tourists this way who were now patronizing the Cascade carriage road via the Midland, cutting out this region entirely. I discussed the project with Mayor Hulbert, of Manitou, and the result was that the three of us agreed upon a campaign to raise a fund for the preliminary survey of the road. I was the first man to subscribe \$100 to a \$1,000 fund to cover the expenses, most of which I raised in less than two hours. I had the satisfaction of seeing that, too, brought to a successful conclusion.

Among other enterprises with which I was connected was that of opening up and naming Ute Chief Spring, located on property then owned by me.

At all times I put forth my best efforts towards building up Manitou, and I had the reputation at that time of doing more for Manitou than any other individual. Especially was this true in the advertising matter I put out for the Manitou Grand Caverns, which was done on an extensive scale, advertising the whole Pikes Peak Region.

But the mountains were always first and foremost in my heart, and many were the excursions I made through their narrow passes and up their precipitous sides.

In the fall of 1879, soon after I came to Manitou, I made the first of these excursions up Williams Cañon, at which time I formed the acquaintance of one Tom Green, the owner of the lime kilns at the Narrows, from whom I first learned about the caves high up in the cliffs.

Mammoth Cave was the best known of these, being the largest of the several that up to that time had been discovered and located high up in the cliff above the Narrows. From this Green was earning a little revenue on the side by charging an admittance fee of 50 cents.

A visit to this cave awakened an interest which led to my making some exploration on my own account, believing that if a larger cave could be found my fortune would be made. During that winter of 1879 and 1880 I effected an entrance into all the holes I could find in the walls of the cañon, among them the original entrance to what was even then known as the Cave of the Winds,



ARTHUR B. LOVE

an appellation bestowed upon it, I afterward learned, by a local photographer, James Thurlow by name, who had taken a number of views of the mountains thereabout, some years before, including this entrance.

The cave as I then found it consisted of but two or three bare and unattractive rooms on the lower level. I found names inscribed on the walls bearing dates as far back as 1872. Unfortunately, many of these names have been obliterated in some subsequent blasting made necessary in enlarging the opening and clearing away of the débris.

Inquiry developed the further fact that a man by the name of Charles Cross, one of the early settlers in this region, claimed to have entered this cave in 1874, and for a time it was referred to as Charlie Cross' Cave.

Another story gives the credit of discovery to the Pickett boys, George and John, who found the entrance in 1880; but as I myself was in this little old cave in 1879, and found by the names and dates inscribed on the walls that there had been others there before me, it is clear that their happening upon the same cave cannot be called a discovery.

Later an attempt was made to open up the cave to visitors, but the rooms as known then, being devoid of any special attraction, all the stalactites having been removed by the early explorers, the attempt proved unsuccessful.

As for myself, I was resolved to delve deeper into these interesting caverns. Accordingly, I spent a large part of the winter of 1880 and 1881, when I could not work at my trade in digging around in an endeavor to find other openings. I found two long, low extensions, one leading to the north, the other to the south. At a later date—to be exact, on January 17, 1881—I was crawling on my hands and knees along the side near the entrance of the lower one of these extensions when I observed what appeared to be a rat hole. I put my candle down close to the hole in order to take a look into it, when a strong current of air passing through it extinguished the candle. I knew then there must be an opening back of that.

Had not this current of air blown out my candle, I should never have found the cave, and I believe the now famous Cave of the Winds would never have been known, for when I pulled this piece of rock away, under which the rat hole passed, the falling débris filled up the hole and there was no longer any sign of an opening; but I at once fell to and removed the rocks and dirt until I had an opening large enough to crawl through. I found myself in another room two or three feet wide by ten feet long. At the farther end of

this room high up in the wall was an opening about two feet wide and six or eight inches high, with an upward slope. I managed to climb up to this and saw that there was an opening which in turn opened into another large room. I ascertained this by the device of fastening several sticks end to end, tying my candle to that, and then pushing it up through the opening.

Being now thoroughly tired out, I decided to quit operations for the time, resolving to return next day and to bring along someone to assist me.

Accordingly, next day I got my brother Horace to go back with me, together with a fellow workman by the name of Charles Hunter, and another fellow, Charles Rinehart, who had come out from Ohio shortly before, and with whom I had been discussing the possibilities of a partnership in the lime kiln business. (This was only tentatively, and in the event that my father did not come out and go into the business with me, as I had been urging him to do for some six months past.)

On returning to the cave with these companions I was enabled by their aid to tie myself by means of ropes close to the opening before referred to, and by dint of much digging and pushing the dirt down behind me, I crawled out fully forty feet above the point where I had entered below, into the center of a gorgeously decorated, canopied chamber—an appearance which suggested my naming the place Canopy Hall. This name it still bears and is now considered one of the most attractive of the many attractive show places in the Cave of the Winds.

I knew that I had made a great discovery, and as I lay there, with my head and shoulders out of the hole, holding my candle above my head to light up the room in all directions as far as possible, the sight was so deeply imbedded in my memory it can never be effaced. It was as though Aladdin with his wonderful lamp had effected the magic result. I had visions of the wealth it would bring me when I should have brought it to the attention of the public and of the ease and comfort it would afford me in my declining years. My days of hard labor would soon be over.

My place of entrance into this room has since been closed up. However, the location may be determined by standing at a point about midway in the room whence the observer has a view of the Bat's Wing on his right and the Icy Curtain on his left.

An examination of the room I had dug my way into, revealed a dazzling array of stalactites and stalagmites; some showing most weird and fantastic formations, others where stalactite and stalagmite met, forming pillars which seemed to support the very roof.



My photo covers the spot in the view where I dug my way up into Canopy Hall, from which I worked my way through into every room now known as the Cave of the Winds

In parts it was with difficulty that I moved about without coming in contact with, and thus destroying, the thousands of beautiful specimens that met me at every turn.

So charmed was I with the grandeur of the chamber into which I had thus penetrated, I then and there resolved to gain possession of the land on which it lay, having learned sometime previously that it was for sale, for I realized that this might be only the beginning of a long series of chambers that might eventually be brought to light and prove of immense value as an investment.

After I had been in the room fifteen or twenty minutes, I returned to the place where I had come in and called to my companions to come up, but cautioned them not to break anything, as I proposed going down next day to bargain for the purchase of the land on which the cave lay.

After drinking in to the full the delicate beauty of the place, we started to return by way of the hole I had discovered and opened up (or the Discovery Hole as it was always called after that), when Rinehart left us, saying: "Wait a minute." With that he went to the farther end of the room, returning with one of the finest specimens of the stalactites he could find, thus being the first to rob and despoil the pristine beauty of this new-found room. "I've got mine," he said, "get yours."

Upon this, Brother Horace and Hunter each made a dash to get one for themselves. I begged them to desist, so they contented themselves with those they found already broken off and lying on the floor.

I now began to ponder over ways and means for buying the property. An appeal to my father back in Ohio sometime previous for funds to go into the lime business, having brought no response, and not having sufficient means of my own, I turned over in my mind the project of seeking a partner, and my thoughts reverted to Rinehart, who had confided to me sometime before that he had several thousand dollars for which he was seeking an investment.

On broaching the subject to him he made the following proposition: He would furnish the capital to purchase and open the cave, providing that Horace, Hunter and myself would do the necessary labor, giving us a half interest, he to keep the other one-half for himself, at the same time cautioning me not to let anyone back in Ohio know that he was investing money out here.

Later, Mr. Rinehart saw fit to change this plan. Leaving out Horace and Hunter as being too many for such a small project, he proposed that he and I go halves; he to furnish the capital, while I was to look after the business.

In compliance with this plan I went down next day to bargain with the then owner, Mr. Frank Hemenway, for the purchase of the land.

Mr. Hemenway agreed to sell the eighty acres for \$1,000, we to make the first payment of \$400 on the first day of April, and \$200 a year thereafter until the full amount was paid. I then paid \$25 down of my own money to bind the bargain.

In the meantime the news of my discovery had spread through the town, and when I returned to Manitou that evening the place was full of stalactite specimens; everyone had some.

Thus that beautiful and wonderful underground chamber that it had taken Nature untold ages to complete, was ruthlessly despoiled in one day at the hands of a lot of thoughtless vandals, led on, as it afterward developed, by the Pickett boys themselves, and the very men who were with them on the occasion of their entrance into the now unused rooms of the Cave of the Winds.

I had never met either of the Pickett brothers during the years I lived in Manitou, but in later years I became well acquainted with John Pickett at his home in Whittier, California. Following is his own version of the story of their discovery and their subsequent spoliation of Canopy Hall that I had discovered and opened up:

"George and I were out with a lot of other boys on a trip up Williams Cañon in company with the Rev. R. T. Cross. Our object was one of exploration, and we had already found several small caves. On our way down George and I left the party and climbed up the west slope in an effort to get out on top of the mountain. We found the trail leading up into the opening in the cliff, and climbed up to a point which proved to be the opening to a cave, a low entrance about five or six feet wide, through which we were obliged to crawl on hands and knees. After looking about a bit we went out and called up the rest of the party. As the cave was open so that anyone could go in that wanted to, we all went in about fifty feet, but could find no more rooms.

"I never went back until you discovered what is now known as the Cave of the Winds. On the day that your discovery became known, the Rev. W. D. Westervelt went over to the Rev. R. T. Cross and told him of the new discovery, telling him to get the boys to come over and secure some specimens, saying that the man who discovered the new cave was going to buy it that day and that he thought we ought to have some of the stalactites, as there had been none in the part we had found. So we all went and got what we wanted."



Vegetable Garden and Dante's Inferno

Thus it will readily be seen that far from being entitled to the honors of discovery, these Pickett boys and their friends helped to destroy the most marvelous stalactite chamber in the now famous Cave of the Winds.

Followed a period of vigorous exploration on my part of my important find, assisted by my brother Horace. I could do and think of nothing else but to search out every nook and corner in this labyrinthine puzzle. The first opening we found leading from Canopy Hall was in the far end, seventy-five or eighty feet beyond the one now used. This was a small hole about a foot high and two feet wide, with a dirt floor. A current of air passed through this, indicating other chambers, so I set to work to dig my way through this, and at the end found myself in a room about ten feet high and ten to fifteen feet in diameter, at whose farther end was a lot of loose rock which I removed, disclosing another opening. By scraping away more dirt I crawled into a long passageway some 300 feet long, varying from three to ten feet wide, and from three to ten feet high. This brought us to a room from which we could see passages leading in opposite directions from the top, and one continuing on the level of the one by which we had entered. This room is now Manitou Dome. We took the latter. To the left of this passage as we progressed, I spied a small hole passing under the side wall on the floor level which we passed by at this time, leaving it for future exploration, and continued to follow the main tunnel which we found came to an end about 100 feet farther on.

Retracing our steps to the hole previously referred to and which we had passed by, and now digging through we found ourselves in a long passage high enough to walk erect for several hundred feet. Here the ceiling was covered with coral-like formations and thick clusters of stalactites. Farther on in our devious windings, my attention was attracted to a hole through which I felt a current of air. I crawled into this, but was finally forced to stop as it grew too small for egress. However, it appeared to grow larger some ten feet beyond the farthest point I was able to reach.

My belief is that this corridor would prove to be the connecting link between the Cave of the Winds and the Grand Caverns, if it were ever properly opened up.

We again retraced our steps to Manitou Dome and here found it necessary to climb up about eight feet into a passage ten feet high, along which we carefully made our way. Coming to a circular bowl or well, I concluded I would take a look around from the bottom of it. I slid down easily enough into it and discovered that three passages about eighteen inches or two feet high branched out

from here, but were so completely blocked with stalactites that I could not get through. I did not stop but went on up the other side, while Horace, following me, slid down into it. I soon came upon a similar basin and I went down into this one. Here ceiling and side walls were encrusted with beautiful crystal formations. From this basin I could see Horace with his candle at the bottom of the well I had just left. After a cursory look about I climbed to the top on the opposite side, and as I emerged I caught my first glimpse of what I afterward named the Cathedral Spires and Bridal Chamber. I called to Horace to come and see what I had found. Simultaneously, he was calling me to do likewise. These are the rooms now pointed out to visitors as Crystal Palace, Old Curiosity Shop and Majestic Hall, but much excavating has been done.

To one familiar with these chambers of wondrous beauty our exultation at their discovery can easily be explained. Everywhere the marvelous formations and striking resemblances to well-known objects captivated my fancy, and appellations for them sprang into being. Canopy Hall had already received its baptismal name from me, and in course of time many fanciful names that are still retained were applied by me to the various formations.

The next day I put some men to work in the cave and had a temporary door built at the entrance.

In the meantime I continued my exploration. I now went into the tunnel at the top opposite the one leading from Reception Hall to the Bridal Chamber. Crawling through this long, low passage to about fifty feet I came upon a deep well. To test its depth I lowered into it a candle which showed it to be about thirty-five feet deep. The light of the candle disclosed a large, roomy space, and I determined to descend. I tied a rope to a piece of timber, making it secure in the tunnel way, and with Horace's help I lowered myself into its depths. I found several small passages radiating therefrom, one of them now designated as Boston Avenue.

I spent some hours searching for such other passages as might exist, but finding none, prepared to return. I climbed to the top by means of my rope, but could not get a hand hold on the rope where it passed over the rim of the well to enable me to pull myself out. I called to Horace, but evidently he was so far away he failed to hear me, and I was obliged to slide down the rope again. This I repeated several times, all the time calling for Horace. Feeling utterly exhausted, at length, I lay down fearing that perhaps Horace had lost his way or had fallen into some hole and was in the same predicament as myself.

What seemed a long time afterward, I heard him calling me

from the top of the well, and in a thrice I was once again on the upper level.

This adventure fell upon the 28th day of January, 1881, and by now I was fully convinced of the value of the cave. Accordingly that night I went down to Rinehart and told him to draw up the contract and I would take it down next day and have Hemenway sign it. This I did and the 29th day of January, 1881, the contract for the deed was duly signed.

This done, I went to work with renewed zest. I put men to work building a road up the cañon; opening up the inside of the cave; building trails and stairways, and otherwise rushing things so as to open the cave to the public at the earliest possible moment. By the 15th of February I had it in shape to take people through.

Rinehart at once took upon himself the post of doorkeeper to which he stuck tenaciously.

My available cash was soon spent as a result of all these improvements, so I was forced to borrow some, giving as security orders for outstanding money owing me for work, but not yet due. This loan, which amounted to \$300, I secured from Mr. Ed Creighton.

As the work of exploration went on we met with many adventures which were not without their perils. We were virtually taking our lives into our hands at each forward step, with nothing but the feeble rays of our candle to guide us, and knowing that we were deep in the very bowels of the earth, in those hidden chambers never yet penetrated by human foot.

On one occasion while worming myself through one of these low tunnel-like openings, the light from my candle revealed a hole in the floor right under my face. I tried the expedient of dropping a stone into it to test its depth. Hearing no sound I concluded that it was shallow and was about to worm my way farther along when I heard that stone I had dropped into the hole hit the floor many feet below. Putting my hands down in front of me to push myself back the floor gave way and I was left hanging head and shoulders over the chasm. Fortunately, lying prone as I was in the cramped passageway, my feet pressing against its upper wall, alone saved me from pitching headlong into the chasm many feet below. Calling to my companion, Lyman Boynton, who chanced to be with me that day, he soon had me extricated from my unpleasant predicament.

Another day, when opening up the inside passages, I chanced upon the small, low corridor now used in leaving Canopy Hall. This I enlarged so that I could pass through, and subsequently emerged into what is now Boston Avenue. Here I came upon some

imprints in the dirt which strongly resembled the tracks of a mountain lion. I spread the alarm and soon had to my aid a number of workmen armed with revolvers. We lined up in battle array and cautiously advanced looking for the formidable lion. To my great surprise we came upon my own pick and shovel, and a close examination showed that the supposed lion tracks were the imprints of my own hands. Apparently the solution was that this was one of the tunnels I had already traversed and had now entered from another direction. The laugh was on me.

About a month after I had arranged for the purchase of the cave lands, I set a day for naming the cave. I deemed this important as already there was a confusion of names from its having been called, now Charlie Cross' Cave, now Pickett's Cave, and first of all Cave of the Winds, this last being the name I continued to apply to it because it was the name by which it was first known, and because it seemed singularly appropriate because my discovery of Canopy Hall resulted from the fact that a current of air had put out my candle at the old rat hole, thus indicating that there were chambers beyond.

In the discussion that arose at the christening, some of my friends wanted it called Snider's Cave; others Pickett's Cave; some Charlie Cross' Cave. As the majority favored Snider's Cave in honor of my own most important discovery, I felt I was justified in choosing to retain the name by which it was best known, so Cave of the Winds it has remained to this day.

Among the party assembled that day to name the cave was William A. Love, better known as Bill Love, of Colorado City. I understood him to say that day that he had filed on that land and had found the entrance and the first two or three rooms in 1871 or 1872, and that he had intended some day if they ever built a town where the Springs were to open the cave and try and make some money out of it. Now, however, I know that it was his brother, Arthur B. Love, now living at 1143 Lincoln Avenue, Colorado City, who filed on the land in 1871 or 1872, and to whom I wrote in January, 1915, for exact information regarding his claims. I wrote this letter to Mr. Love because of a letter I had received from brother Perry, stating that Mr. A. B. Love of Colorado City had been up to the cave July 4, 1913, and had said that he had been in the cave in 1871 or 1872, being the first man to find and go into that old entrance.

I will add that I had forgotten what Bill Love had told me so many years ago, but when I read this letter it all came back to me. But as Mr. Arthur B. Love says in his letter, I must have got him

and his brother Bill mixed. His letter speaks for itself, and is as follows:

Mr. Geo. Snider,
Los Angeles, Cal.

Dear Friend:

I received your letter about three weeks ago, and thought at the time I would answer immediately, but was busy and time flies, and I didn't realize it had been so long until I got your letter out tonight to answer. I hope the delay hasn't inconvenienced you very much. You seem to have my brother Bill (William A. Love) and myself mixed. I am Arthur B. Love and it was I who took up the land on which the Cave of the Winds is. Bill must have told you his brother took it, and you either misunderstood him or have forgotten. I took up 160 acres, under the Pre-emption Act, I think, either in 1871 or 1872, and built a cabin in the cañon in sight of the hole in the cave; that was the old entrance. As far as I know no one had found the cave before that. No one ever reported finding it before that. At the time I took up the land there was no trail up the cañon; I had to cut my trail up to where I built my cabin and to the opening of the cave. There was not a house in Manitou at that time, and no one lived there. There was a trapper who came in about the same time I did and camped at the Spring. I spent one summer in my cabin just below the cave and bathed in the big Soda Springs for rheumatism. I found the cave and brother Bill (William A. Love), brother Bob (Robert F. Love) and myself went in about fifty or seventy-five feet. If anyone had ever been there before there was no sign of it, for as I said there was no trail, and I had to cut a way through. In 1873 I bought eighty acres out of the land office and let the rest go. The eighty acres that I bought had the cave on it. I did not take it for the cave, however, but for the timber. I packed my things up on a horse to where I built my cabin and had to cut a trail with my axe. At that time my brother Bob (Robert F. Love) and Mr. Thomas Girtten owned the Soda Springs and it had no other name. They sold to the company that founded Manitou and named it. The cañon had no name when I took my claim, but after Bob sold to the Manitou company, they called it Manitou Cañon, and later Williams Cañon. There were no other claims in the cañon or around there when I took my claim. I sold my eighty acres, not long after I bought it out of the land office, to Browning, a Methodist minister, and he lived there. After I sold I did not go up there again until July 4, 1913, a year ago last Fourth of July. My wife and I walked up to the cave. Of course, there was a great change

since I'd been there last in 1873, but I recognized where my cabin had stood, and pointed it out to my wife. Your brother kindly sent us through the cave and we enjoyed it very much. It is grand, something one would never tire looking at. I have forgotten the exact date I filed on the land, but know it was not later than the spring of 1872, and I rather think it was in 1871.

I have told you as best I could all I know about the cave that I can make affidavit to. If there is anything else you would like to ask, I would be glad to tell you, if I know.

Hoping this finds you well, as it leaves us, and that this will be of use to you, I remain,

Your friend,

(Signed)

ARTHUR B. LOVE.

The cabin which Mr. Love built on this land was the first cabin built anywhere in the vicinity of Manitou west of Colorado City, and as he says in his letter, "there was not a house in Manitou when I took my claim," the site of this pioneer cabin should be marked by a monument.

This letter proves beyond all cavil that Arthur B. Love was the first man to effect an entrance into this much discovered cave. For, to quote from his letter, "*At the time I took up the land there was no trail up the cañon; I had to cut my trail up to where I built my cabin and to the opening of the cave.*"

In corroboration of this letter, I have his affidavit and the affidavit of Mr. Martin Drake, banker, and Mr. J. P. Jackson, justice of the peace, both honored and well-known citizens of Colorado City, Colorado, who have vouched for the truth of Love's statement. I also have in my possession Love's patent for the land granted by the United States Government, under date of May 26, 1873, after Love had proved up on the land.

Following are the affidavits above mentioned:

I, Arthur B. Love, do hereby make affidavit that the foregoing letter is a true statement in every particular.

In witness whereof I hereunto set my hand and seal this 11th day of August, 1915.

(Signed)

ARTHUR B. LOVE.

STATE OF COLORADO, }
County of El Paso, } ss.

On this 11th day of August, 1915, before me personally, came Arthur B. Love, to me known to be the person described in and who

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executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged the execution thereof for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

(Signed)

JOSEPH P. JACKSON,

Notary Public in and for the County of El Paso, State of Colorado.

My commission expires August 15, 1917.

We, the undersigned, do each and severally hereby make affidavit that Arthur B. Love has been personally known to us for twenty-five years, and that he has always been recognized as a person of honor and integrity, and as one whose word can be relied upon, and we do each and severally hereby vouch for the verity of his statements as set forth in the letter above.

In witness whereof we hereunto set our hand and seal this 10th day of August, 1915.

(Signed)

MARTIN DRAKE.

J. P. JACKSON.

STATE OF COLORADO, }
County of El Paso, } ss.

On this 11th day of August, 1915, before me personally, came Martin Drake and J. P. Jackson, to me known to be the persons described in and who executed the foregoing instrument and acknowledged the execution thereof for the uses and purposes therein mentioned.

(Signed)

JOHN N. RICKARDS,

Notary Public in and for the County of El Paso, State of Colorado.

My commission expires March 5, 1917.

A Trip Through the Cave of the Winds as It Is Today

Today this cave, once the secluded and mysterious haunt of the gnomes and elves of the underground, where never ray of sunshine pierced its gloomy depths, or never sound of human voice rang through its muffled corridors, resounds to the well-nigh ceaseless tread of countless hosts come to penetrate its mystic charm and spread abroad the story of its fame that countless others may, in turn, prolong the endless chain.

And now, lured on by the presiding genii of the place, let us enter with them and learn the secrets of its guarded halls.

From the vantage point of the bridge leading out of the offices of the company to the entrance of the cave as it is today, our guide points out a cleft like a double archway in the rocky wall, through which the first discoverer of the cave made an entrance. When approaching this point on the Temple Drive through Williams Cañon, this cleft is plainly discernible and engages the attention of the observer by its striking resemblance to the Natural Bridge of Virginia.

We now enter the artificial tunnel that in 1895 had been blasted through the rock to form a more convenient entrance into the cave. Passing through this we enter Curtain Hall, so named from the fluted, curtain-like effect of the solid carbonate decorating one of the walls, the ribbon stalactites representing the draped folds of the curtain. Later, after completing the circuit of the cave, we are returned to this point where we are again given a view of this novel curtain under new conditions. By that time our eyes have become accustomed to the lights of the cave, and are able to bear the high power arc light that is now thrown upon the curtain, which brings out in startling effect the gorgeous coloring of its folds. This is truly the masterpiece of the entire aggregation and receives the warmest encomiums from all who witness it.

Our attention is next directed to a point high up on the opposite wall where perches a perfect representation of a white rat formed from the stalagmite by drippings from its corresponding stalactite just above. In its mouth a tiny American flag has been placed, thus giving a touch of humor much appreciated by visitors.

Canopy Hall with its many fantastic formations next claims our attention. Here we find a petrified cascade that geologists tell us has been thousands of years in forming. Out of its hard carbo-



Curtain Hall—Cave of the Winds

nate are manufactured many of the souvenirs that are sold at the cave, being susceptible of a very high polish.

Near this petrified waterfall is its mate in a formative stage. We can see the slowly trickling water whose mineral deposits are responsible for the striking phenomenon.

An inverted Frying Pan with its drippings of chicken gravy calls forth much amused comment; also the buffalo's head and the pig's head.

The gigantic Bat's Wing forming the canopy from which the room derives its name claims a large share of excited attention.

Passing on from this chamber of marvels we are led on through the long, narrow and crooked aisle of Boston Avenue, so named many years ago by a Raymond and Whitcomb party of tourists from Boston.

While threading the mazes of this crooked lane the guide turns off the electric current, leaving us in Egyptian darkness, in order to dramatically illustrate the primitive darkness of the caverns and to enable us the more readily to realize with what the early discoverer and explorer of these caverns had to contend.

As we emerge from Boston Avenue we find ourselves in the large Reception Room of the genii of the place. As a matter of courtesy, and to gain their good will each caller leaves his visiting card, the collection we see there now apparently running into the thousands.

The injunction to stand under the Wishing Well and register our most cherished desire meets with some opposition, as the guide insists that the wish must be uttered aloud. However, our real interest lies in looking up through the Wishing Well twenty-five feet or more to the third level of the cave. Through this hole visitors were once let down into these lower levels and up again by means of ladders. To eliminate this unpleasant method of progress, a new passageway was opened up by means of blasting out a portion of the wall and putting in a stairway.

Leaving this chamber we find ourselves in Lovers' Lane, where a lament goes forth from certain of the party that the lights had been turned off in the wrong place, but no notice is taken of this hint, for the decorations of this room absorb our interest. A luscious bunch of California grapes hang just beyond our reach. Here a tantalizing glimpse into Elmer's Grotto is vouchsafed, but entrance is barred; we can but stand at a distance and gaze wistfully into the illuminated grotto in which is imprisoned the finest stalagmite now remaining intact in the entire cave. In view of past depredations

by conscienceless visitors, we can but admit that this segregation is a wise precaution.

Wonders increase as we advance, while our vocabulary diminishes in proportion, for we have long since exhausted our stock of superlatives.

Along the ninety feet of delicate alabaster crystals in Diamond Hall we are prone to forget that there is a sordid world outside awaiting us, and fancy ourselves instead the enchanted occupants of some fairy realm whose glories hold us spellbound. What matters it that the exquisite mosaics on its walls are not real diamonds—the effect is the same. The sparkling calcite here takes on such fantastic shapes the mind is taxed to find similes for them all. So striking are the resemblances to familiar objects the temptation to name them is irresistible, and we are called upon to observe here a cluster of chestnut burrs, there a plate of shredded wheat, and more exquisite still, fronds of ferns and glittering cobwebs of purest white, and to cap it all perfect gems and wreaths of coral hanging festooned from the ceiling.

Everywhere the eye may feast but hand may not touch. One object alone escapes this mandate; invites, in fact, a caressing touch. This is a projecting stalagmite whose highly polished surface, like glistening onyx, indicates that the thousands of tourists in times ago have responded to the subtle invitation.

Two perfectly formed columns, side by side, where stalagmite and stalactite meet, known as Twin Columns, form the climax to this hall of wonders.

We retrace our steps through the long extent of Diamond Hall. Here attention is called to the hollow, reverberating sound resulting from a sharp blow on the floor at a certain point, indicating that some hollow vault lies below whose place of entrance is still a locked secret, suggesting to the imagination untold realms of possible splendors hidden from the eye of man.

We next enter a suite of four rooms collectively known as Crystal Palace. Here is found in lavish profusion the delicate Flowering Alabaster, luxuriating in myriads of fanciful and flower-like forms.

Of this suite Finley Hall is the first to claim our attention. It presents some of the most interesting geological formations known to man. It attracted the interested attention of Mr. Finley, one time professor of geology in Colorado College, whose custom it was to bring his classes here for the purpose of geological investigation, and it is to this fact that the room owes its name.

A striking stalagmite formation here is the Sitting Elephant,



The Altar

so perfect in structure no effort of the imagination is needed to recognize it. An Oriental Shrine stands close by, and in the background the Veiled Lady tempts a closer view, but is amply protected from intrusion by the guarding elephant. It would seem that elephants and veiled ladies would fall far out of the scope of geological investigation, until one recalls that in these haunts of the underground fairies the known becomes the unknown, and all previous theories are turned topsy turvy.

This truth is further exemplified in the second room of the suite known as Old Curiosity Shop. Here the laws of gravity seem to be flouted and each new-forming stalagmite or stalactite follows its own sweet will in an effort to outdo its rivals on either hand, for here we find one sending out a spur at right angles to itself; another on its downward course changes its mind and reverses itself; still others assume such twisted shapes that it is beyond human nature to resist likening them to pretzels, and one instinctively reaches for a stein.

So precious are the crystal formations on the ceilings in Crystal Alcove and Majestic Hall, it has been found expedient to protect them by wire netting which guards, but does not obscure, the glittering calcite covering their surfaces in unbroken splendor. The Jewel Casket in a niche by itself is of the purest white calcite, in sharp contrast to some of the surrounding effects that have become discolored by some mineral matter giving it the effect of burnt frosting.

Attention is called to the difference in the ceilings of the two rooms; that in the alcove presenting an unbroken surface of tiny crystals formed by vaporization from the inside, while that in Majestic Hall is a mass of minute stalactites formed from calcarious waters trickling downward through crevices in the rocks above.

From these enchanting scenes we are torn by the obdurate guide who consoles us by the lure of other marvels. He conducts us up a flight of stairs to the third level of the cave, 7,500 feet above sea level.

Here we admit the guide makes good, for as we ascend the steps there bursts upon our view the towering spires of some old-world cathedral, surpassing in splendor anything we have yet seen. This stands just inside the Bridal Chamber, where we behold still other wonders in endless variety. Dante's *Inferno* chills the blood with its vision of writhing, tortured souls in eternal punishment—whether apropos or not, opinion is divided. For pure choice the preponderance of opinion seems to favor the Vegetable Garden, where many varieties growing downward from the roof seem to

give promise of unlimited feasts without money and without price—a luxury not to be despised in these stringent times.

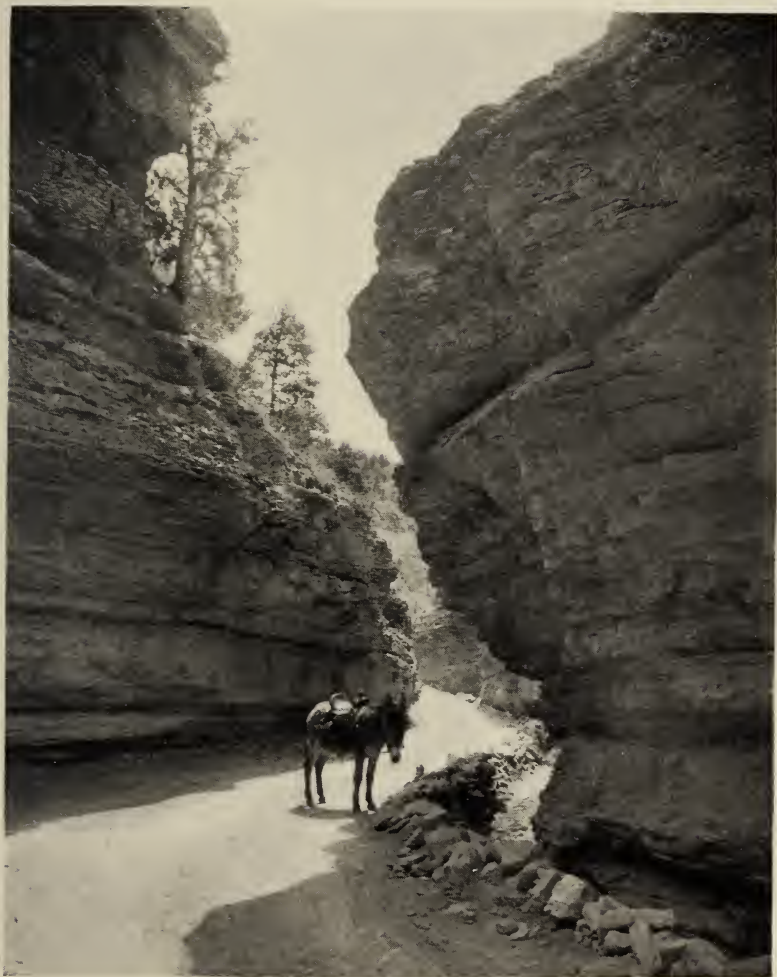
Apparently old Mother Nature realized that too long a stretch of the sublime would be likely to pall on the surfeited beholder, so she provides for an abrupt descent to the ridiculous. We are led through a narrow aperture known as Fat Man's Misery, which certain of the party intimated was justly named. When safely through, we are allowed a brief moment to gaze with covetous eyes at the great clusters of calcite resembling coral that thickly studs the ceiling at this point, not omitting an especially striking formation in the shape of a pure white radish pendent over our heads.

Now we are ushered ceremoniously into Old Maid's Kitchen, with the solemn adjuration to the ladies, *not* to add their quota of hairpins to the already accumulated millions found there, lest within the year they should have the misfortune to find themselves married! "I'd just like to find the hairpin my wife stuck in there," one old grouch was heard to remark. "If one should withdraw the hairpin left there a year ago, would that be equivalent to a divorce?" anxiously inquired one of the fair sex.

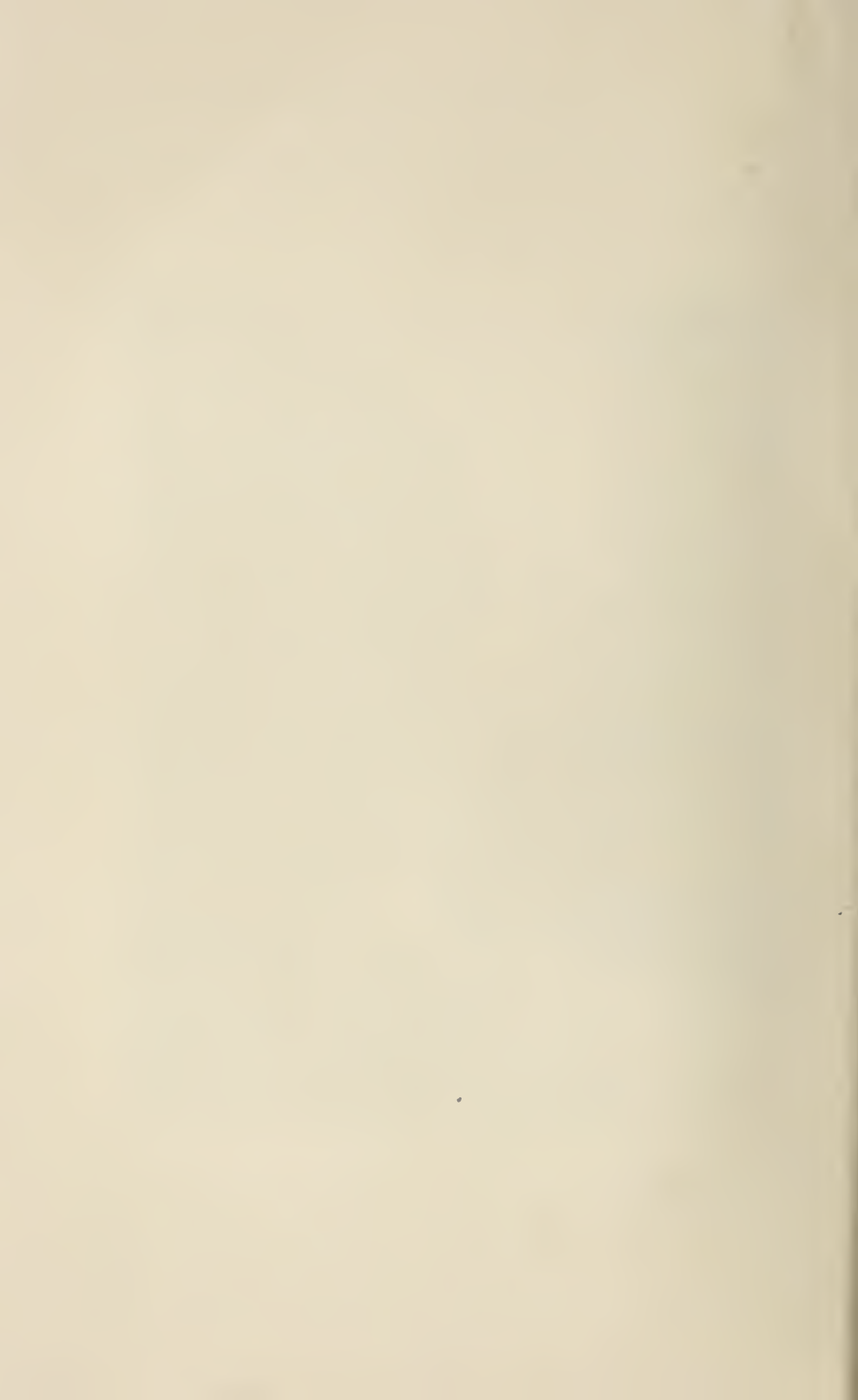
After taking a scrub at Nature's Washboard the party is now led back through Boston Avenue on its return to the outer world. We pass once more through Canopy Hall, which now seems to have assumed gigantic proportions after the smaller rooms and confined passageways.

Before proceeding to the feast of Sliced Bacon displayed temptingly before our greedy eyes, we are given a backward glimpse of what now looks like a great stage set with all the appurtenances of a modern theater: the oncoming parties of tourists being the actors; the unique structure of the side walls forming the boxes; the fantastic shapes and projections seen everywhere forming the flies and set pieces. The effect is magical, and we fain would linger to witness the end of the play. But the guide seems to wave his magic wand, and ere we are aware, we are standing once more in daylight's blinding glare.

The auto road from Manitou to the cave is the most beautiful and wonderful in the Pikes Peak Region. Leaving Manitou you pass the Cliff House via Cañon Avenue up Williams Cañon, which is so narrow in most places that autos cannot pass each other, and on through the famous Narrows, and under the towering walls and cliffs for about one mile to the Amphitheatre; here the road turns to the left switching back along the side of the cañon to the top of the ridge, then another switch back to the right and on up to the very mouth of the cave, where a large office building has been built with



Williams Cañon



HOW I FOUND THE CAVE OF THE WINDS

all modern conveniences for the accommodation of tourists. This drive has long been known as Temple Drive. On leaving the cave take the New Cañon Rim road to the right, zig zagging down into Ute Pass and Manitou. This Cañon Rim road has been recently constructed by the Cave Company at a tremendous cost. The round trip is a little over four miles and cannot be excelled for scenic grandeur, and it is the best kept road that can be found anywhere. This trip alone is worth the \$1.00 admission to the cave. There are more than 60,000 people visiting the cave annually.

The cave is now owned and operated by THE CAVE OF THE WINDS SCENIC ATTRACTIONS Co., Manitou, Colorado, U. S. A.



Other Scenic Attractions in the Pikes Peak Region of Colorado

In this famous Scenic Pikes Peak Region, within easy reach of Manitou and Colorado Springs, are the following drives and points of interest:

Drives and Points of Interest

Ute Iron Springs and Pikes Peak Railway.	Cañon City and Skyline Drive.
Cave of the Winds.	M. W. A. Sanatorium and Monument Park.
Williams Cañon, Temple and Cañon Rim Drive.	Cripple Creek via Cascade Cañon.
Garden of the Gods.	Ute Pass, Cascade and Green Mountain Falls.
Indian Mesa to Colorado Springs.	Pikes Peak by Auto.
Seven Falls and Cheyenne Cañon.	Crystal Park by Auto.
Broadmoor and Myron Stratton Home.	And many other beautiful drives and walks.

Altitudes Above Sea Level

Pikes Peak 14,108 feet	Cave of the Winds 7,475 feet
Crystal Park 8,745 feet	Colorado Springs 5,989 feet
Manitou 6,336 feet	Cripple Creek 9,396 feet

Points of Interest in the Garden of the Gods

Old Baggage Room.	The Turtle.	Egyptian Sphinx.
Mushroom Park.	Old Washer Woman.	Queen of the Garden.
Toad Stools and Toad.	Grand View.	Seal and Bear.
The Deer Head.	The Eagle.	Cathedral Spires.
The Ant-Eater.	Punch and Judy.	Kissing Camels.
Old Man's Wine Cellar.	Old Scotchman.	The Gateway.
Balanced Rock.		

PART II.



HOW I LOST THE
CAVE OF THE
WINDS

and the

MANITOU
GRAND CAVERNS



Introductory

Having told in the preceding chapter how I discovered the Cave of the Winds and the Manitou Grand Caverns, I now undertake to tell how I lost possession of these properties. In this connection a bit of history relative to myself will not be amiss.

I was the second of the nine Snider brothers. At the age of nineteen I left my home in Ohio to seek a living among strangers. I soon learned to do a hard day's work at my trade of stone-cutting, living in cheap boarding houses, and sometimes being discharged and getting pretty hungry before another job turned up.

Altho I soon became an expert workman, the labor was hard, and I began to think about getting into some kind of business where I could be boss instead of being bossed.

When I found these caves, I knew I had just what I had been looking for so many years, so I went to work harder than ever drilling and blasting in opening up the caves and building the roads. There was plenty of hard work to do, but as I thought of the wealth it would bring me later on, I would work with all my might.

All this time I was planning to get the rest of the family out here and get them into business as good as I had found for myself. Colorado was a new country then and opportunities were plenty.

The first summer that I was here I lived in a tent, but in the fall I rented a cheap room and "bached." I was living in that room when I found the cave. I mention this to show the contrast between the way Perry is now living and the way I lived when I laid the foundation of this enterprise.

When father and Perry arrived in Colorado Springs I rode over from Manitou on my little pony to meet them. It was one of the happiest days of my life.

Father had brought with him plans for a lime-kiln and at once began to break the ground for building, while I kept on developing my cave, employing Perry and Charles as guides and paying them as I had paid other guides.

Little did I think that within 15 years Charles and Perry would be in full control of my interests in both these caves, but it is nevertheless true that altho I discovered, bought, and paid for, and opened up both the Cave of the Winds and the Manitou Grand Caverns, I never received a dollar for all

my labor and the money I put into them. At the end of 34 years I only held a twelfth interest in all this great property. I have been refused any kind of work by Perry and Charles ever since they got me out in 1886, 15 years after I made the discovery. Some time in June, 1916, I made Perry an offer to take my stock at par, which would be \$25,000, which he accepted. At this time Ford Snyder, Clyde's brother, has \$1,200 worth of stock and I also have a sixth interest in my Grand Caverns land which Perry values at \$30,000. Later, Perry came to me and said he would give me \$25,000 for my stock and Ford's, and my interest in that land. This offer I refused because it was \$6,200 less than what I had offered it at. I have since tried to sell to others and had agents also trying to find a buyer.

On the 18th of July, 1916, in the office of the cave, I had a very stormy interview with Perry in regard to selling my book descriptive of my discovery and development of the cave. The language he used to me in that, my last visit to the cave, sent me away heavy hearted. I was greatly depressed and when I went home my wife was alarmed when she saw me. She made me tell her the whole story and then she insisted on my selling out my interest and getting the whole thing off my mind.

I went to see Mr. Campbell about it and he finally offered me \$20,000 for my stock and my interest in the Caverns land. My wife and I decided that the best thing we could do was to accept Mr. Campbell's offer and say goodbye to Colorado forever. Thus it will be seen that thru Perry's unkindness and greedy selfishness I lost another \$5,000 *that fatal day*.

Out of the profits of the cave Perry and Charles have been living in luxury ever since they got Elmore and me out of the business. They sported fine horses and buggies, and now Perry has two automobiles. They took several trips to the old home in Ohio, and as far as Washington, D. C., and the Luray Caverns in Virginia. This is the way they paid the debts.

The following pages will show clearly by their own agreements, contracts, and letters what underhanded and unprincipled methods they used in obtaining what I had saved, and eventually ousting me entirely from the property. I look upon it with the deepest indignation and as a cowardly outrage, for one brother to perpetrate upon another. At this late day and in this public way I want to make an appeal to my brothers to do me financial justice, and to pay me what their consciences must tell them they owe me. In the matter of that

\$600 a year agreement which amounts \$1,500 each, including Clyde, the following is the way matters stand:

Besides losing to Rinehart one-half of both the Cave of the Winds and the Grand Caverns, he got the best of over	\$ 2,000
Also the money I put in in opening up the cave.....	800
The money I helped Wm. to for school house contract..	2,500
What he used to pay mortgage on his home.....	2,200
The money he used which caused the consolidation....	2,000
Money I borrowed for freight on channeler.....	1,000
Charles and my debt, secured by mortgage on my home— —for which it was sold, with interest	2,000
Over \$1,000 worth of pictures and signs, that I paid for, that went with the caverns when I loaned them to Charles	1,000
Second payment on cave, \$200 with interest.....	248
For horse and buggy smashed by William	340
House removed from Cavern lands by Perry	1,500
Money I borrowed from J. B. Wheeler that they lost in the lime and stone business.....	22,500
And \$14,000 borrowed on mother's property	14,000
Total	<u>\$41,588</u>

Besides this large sum of money which were all losses to Mr. Wheeler and myself, I was beaten out of the Cave of the Winds and the Grand Caverns, leaving me without shelter for myself and my wife—all of which is set forth in the following pages which give the story in full detail.

In conclusion, I must ask Perry to contrast my last visit and our parting, and his language to me, with the first day he came to Manitou, and the first time I took he and father thru the cave and showed them my wonderful find; how I pointed out to them with pleasure where I had dug thru, and told them the story of how I had taken Rinehart in with me. Compare all this, and more that could be said, with the change that 35 years have brought about—he now in absolute control and monarch over all he surveys and I—oh, where am I!

Herein is revealed the truth, let the sting fall where it is aimed; a vindication of my claims, as set forth herein, is the reward I now ask.

Yours very truly

GEO. W. SNIDER.

How I Lost the Cave of the Winds

So much for the historical part of my narrative; now for the events that led up to my becoming dispossessed of and banished from, this fair domain upon which I had spent so much effort, and expended all my savings since coming to Colorado, covering a period of eighteen years—the prime of my life.

It is not the most pleasant thing in the world to sit by and watch an estate worth half a million dollars, being administered by others who are reaping a rich harvest yearly from sightseers who flock hither from all parts of the world—my knowing all the while that I am its original discoverer, purchaser, and exploiter. And not this alone, but the added bitterness of knowing that my brother, O. P. Snider, has deliberately plotted to deny me the credit of any part of this discovery, and even obliterated my name entirely from it, and making a point of emphasizing names whose right to the honor of discovery I have disproved in the foregoing pages.

These things are hard to believe, I admit, but it so happens that the proofs are forthcoming to sustain my contentions, and are herein set forth, not in the hope of reparation, but with the desire to vindicate my claims before the world, and show up the unscrupulous methods by means of which this great wrong has been perpetrated.

It will be necessary to go back in my story to the point when the first payment of \$400 on the Cave of the Winds lands fell due, or rather, the \$375, as I had paid \$25 down of my own money the day I made the agreement with Hemenway, the then owner.

It will be remembered that Rinehart had agreed to furnish the capital to purchase the Cave of the Winds lands, while I was to oversee the work of opening it up, getting it in shape for visitors, and to build a roadway up the canyon. By this agreement each of us was to have a one-half interest.

I had been faithfully performing my part of the agreement, hiring men, including my brother Horace, and I, myself, working with pick and shovel, hammer and drills to do the necessary labor, paying them out of such funds as I had coming to me from various sources. I soon had the cave temporarily in running order, and it was now more than paying its way. But I continued making more permanent improvements. But before my part of the work was completed, my own

funds were exhausted, and I went up to the Cave to help with the work of receiving visitors. Rinehart had been taking in the money, and had hired guides to conduct visitors thru it.

I expected, of course, that we would divide the proceeds between us each night, or at least once a week, but Rinehart objected to this, saying he had opened up a set of books and that we should keep accounts that way.

I soon began to suspect that he was not dealing fairly by me. I knew we were taking in from \$15 to \$30 a day, but I saw precious little of what he took in. He made some pretense of helping pay expenses, but it was hard work to make him let go of a dollar. Brother Horace and I had been "bach-ing" that winter, and I was paying most of the living expenses for both of us. He had \$75 back pay coming to him, and as he was going prospecting that spring he wanted his money. As I had no cash with which to pay him, I appealed to Rinehart. He paid it and about as much more, but that is about all he ever came across with.

About the first of March, he came to me with the story that his money was all tied up back East, and that he could not get hold of it. He urged me to write to my father for money to make the payment which was to fall due the first of April, making the point that if we let the land go by default, I would not only lose my half-interest, but all the money I had already put into it.

This opened my eyes to the fact that he had been playing me false from the first; that he had little, if any, money. I could now see plainly why he had left brother Horace and Hunter out of the original deal, being sharp enough to know that one would be an easier prey than three. I recalled, too, how he had cautioned me not to let a living soul back in Ohio know that he had any interest in property in Colorado—t'was quite clear he had his reasons.

I saw that I was squarely up against it. But I knew we had in these cave lands a profitable investment, and I was anxious to hold them. Never again would that piece of land be on the market at the price for which I had secured it. So I determined to take a chance and make an effort to raise the money myself with which to meet this first payment.

Some time back, I had been corresponding with my father relative to his coming out here with the family to go into the lime business, representing that among us we could do all the work and keep the profits in the family, explaining that the

lime was of an extra quality, and expressing my belief that we would soon be making a good thing out of it.

Father had been caught in the panic of 1873, that swept the country following the Jay Cooke failure, and had lost about everything he possessed. Therefore, I was anxious to get them all out here as the way seemed clear to mend our broken fortunes. Father was disposing of what property he had left and had my plans under advisement and was then negotiating with a Mr. C. B. Corey, of Cleveland, Ohio, for a new limekiln model Mr. Corey had just invented.

To hurry the matter up, I now wrote him about this new venture of mine, explaining the particulars of my connection with Rinehart and agreeing that I would deed him my one-half interest in the cave lands, on which there was plenty of lime stone, if he would send me \$500 to make this payment.

To this he replied, saying that he and my brother Perry would come out at once with the money, warning me at the same time to keep a sharp eye on Rinehart, as he was known to be a dishonest old scoundrel, being then a fugitive from justice. He went on to explain that Rinehart had been administrator for several estates and had gotten away with most of the money, besides defrauding one of his law partners, and being involved in other crooked schemes.

I now understood Rinehart's methods, and watched him closely. We had men at work all the time making improvements and there was need of money to pay them. Although we were sharing about equally in the receipts at the cave, he never seemed to have enough money to pay his share of expenses, and I was put to it to secure enough from our income to pay these and the running expenses.

When father and brother Perry arrived, father gave me the \$500, which he said mother had sent out to me, and with this I met the balance of that first payment of \$375, due April first, 1881, and applied the balance to improvements.

When father learned how my interests were tied up with Rinehart's, he refused to go into the lime or cave business with Rinehart for a partner, and seeing that I could not shake him off, he left me to manage as best I could. As there was plenty of good lime lands to be had almost for the taking, he and some of my brothers, who had now come out, filed on other pieces of land on which there was an abundance of lime.

During the following July, I wanted to go over in the Gunnison country to help my brother Horace, who had been there for some time prospecting. Brother Perry had gone

out with him, but being too much of a tenderfoot, he had returned. (Fact is it was the first time he had ever been away from father and mother, and the hard work of prospecting and roughing it, had been too much for him.)

I went to Rinehart and arranged with him to let my brother Charles represent me at the cave, and to let Perry continue there as guide. This seemed perfectly satisfactory to Rinehart and I left feeling that things would be properly looked after.

No sooner had I left than he took the reins in his own hands, firing both my brothers and giving them to understand that he was running that cave and would do as he pleased in his partner's absence. And that is just what he did—put in guides of his own choosing, and kept for himself all the receipts.

About the middle of September I returned, and learning how things had been handled, I asked for a settlement. This he evaded, and eventually skipped out, not showing up again till the next spring. He left behind him many debts, which fortunately I was soon able to pay off, as we did a good business that fall.

It seemed that I was destined to nothing but trouble, for no sooner was I out of this than a new one befell me. The caves had been shut down for the winter and I was working at the limekiln, when one day about the last of January, I learned that Frank Hemenway, with three or four other men, had gone up to the cave, broken the lock, and taken possession. I lost no time, but buckled on my six-shooter, jumped on my pony and made a dash for the cave, vowing that I would kill the whole bunch if they didn't get out, or know the reason why. I had to go alone, as none of my brothers would go with me, considering it none of their affair, and fearing trouble, advised me to keep out of it.

On reaching the Cave, I found them all sitting on a bench at the entrance, the lock broken and the door open. I walked up to them demanding to know what they meant. They replied that we had forfeited our contract by failing to make a payment that had fallen due several days past. I told Hemenway to look at his contract and he'd find quickly enough that no payments were due till the first of April. High words followed and one of the party started toward me with a threatening look. I jumped back into the entrance of the Cave, pulled my gun and raised the hammer. I warned them that if they took possession of that cave it would be over my dead body,

ordering them to leave at once, or I would shoot and shoot to kill. With that they went away.

Next day, armed with my contract, I sought out Hemenway, who then admitted I was right in the matter. To clinch things, I paid him some money down on the next payment, and resolved to borrow the balance to finish it off. Part of the money I had to borrow on short time, and to pay that back I wrote to my brother Frank, who had located in Pueblo, telling him of the incident, and asking to borrow Thirty-five Dollars that I needed to pay back on my loan. To this he replied as follows:

So. Pueblo, Colo., 2-16-82.

Brother George:

Yours just received and I hasten to answer it. I showed your letter to Judge F. H. Shrock, also to Judge Beck, of this place, and they say that the Hemenways will have to sue you before they can obtain the right of possession, therefore you have no grounds to be alarmed on. And furthermore, you can have the whole crowd arrested for breaking open and damaging your property, as they did it unlawfully. I will send or bring you the Thirty-five Dollars on Sunday or Monday. You say you borrowed Thirty-five Dollars to pay your half; now let me ask you if old Rinehart has paid his half? And Mr. Rinehart and Snider will oblige me by giving me their note, at three months from date, as old Rinehart is a damned old gut, and I don't propose to give him a quarter of an inch on me. . . . You look out for Number One hereafter and you will come out better in the long run.

Yours truly,

Your Brother, Frank.

This letter is ample proof that the cave at this time was considered the property of Charles Rinehart and myself. If, as Perry and Charles claim, it was a family affair, why should Frank write as he did, and why did not they furnish this money.

I quote thus fully from my brother's letter, because in the light of after events, when my brothers had done everything in their power to defraud me, it affords excellent testimony as to whether or not any of them had any interest in that Cave outside of Rinehart and myself.*

*The following quotation from a letter from Brother Perry 29 years later: "You know that father furnished the money to get the property—it never belonged to you individually any more than it did to any of the rest of us."

By this time, my father and four of the boys—John, Perry, Charles and Horace, had each filed on a quarter section of limestone land, with the purpose of building up a lime business. As it fell out, father and Charles never proved up on their land, considering that they had enough lime with what was on the claims of Horace, John and Perry.

The quarter section that Perry had filed on was a piece Rinehart had planned to pre-empt, having paid the original claimant \$100 to release it to him. As it afterward turned out this land reverted to the government by the owner's very act of relinquishing his claim, and as Rinehart had just taken up one piece of land, under the law he was barred from taking another. Now that Perry had taken up this same piece, Rinehart charged that \$100 up to me.

I speak of this, because in after years, the various sums I had expended for my brothers' benefit were never taken into account in their dealings with me.

Father now bought in a seven-acre plat of ground east of town for the kilns and a home. Building the home first, we all then went to work on the kilns, as it was admittedly a family affair, and we were all to share and share alike.

In a short time we had established a paying lime business. At first the business was all in father's name, but Perry and Charles soon became dissatisfied with father's ways of doing business, considering them old-fashioned. So they persuaded father to get out and let them run the business in the name of Snider Brothers.

The firm name of Snider Brothers sounds all-inclusive, but the truth of the matter was that Perry and Charles really constituted the firm and ran the business to suit themselves. The rest of us were engaged for the most part with our respective occupations; Frank being in the drug business in Pueblo; John working at his trade of plumbing; William at stonecutting; Horace prospecting up in the Gunnison Country; while I was chiefly occupied with the Cave. Edgar and Elmore being mere boys were not considered.

However, we all helped more or less at the kilns, and tho we drew no pay, we were a happy, hardworking bunch, and we considered the business a family affair, each one being willing to contribute his share toward our ultimate success. What money I cleared from the Cave went into the family exchequer, and when the '83 and '84 payments were due on the Cave lands, Snider Brothers' check paid the bill. (Rinehart was never there when a payment was due).

As for the Cave; from the time we opened it up until I turned my share over to Snider Brothers, Rinehart got the better of me (as near as I could estimate from the haphazard way in which he kept the books), by about \$2,000, besides his half-interest, for which he had never paid a cent. He was a lawyer by profession, and just clever enough to keep within the law in the matter by paying his share of the taxes and doing a little now and then towards paying expenses.

I was informed that there was a law in Colorado at that time exempting a man from former debts contracted in other states providing he had lived in Colorado three years unmolested and paid taxes on real estate during that period. Rinehart knew of this law and was taking advantage of it.

At the time of making the last payment on the cave lands and getting the deed recorded, an incident occurred which shows up in his true colors the unprincipled wretch whose villainies marked the beginning of all my misfortunes.

Some time before this payment fell due, my attorney, Judge McMorris, warned me not to let that last payment be delayed, advising me to pay it at once to avoid any contingency that might arise. I took his advice, and he went with me to record the deed. No sooner was it recorded, than McMorris filed an attachment on Rinehart's half interest.

It developed that one of Rinehart's administrator bondsmen back in Ohio had been obliged to pay \$2,000 on his account, and had subsequently employed McMorris to get restitution out of Rinehart if he owned any property. This explained the Judge's haste to get the deed recorded before the three years were up. But I had to suffer the consequences.

Rinehart had to pay up or lose his one-half interest; but he came to me with blood in his eye, holding me responsible for having the deed made in his name, which I had done according to the original contract drawn up by himself in the beginning. The wily fellow had been intending all the while to put it in the name of his wife, by which, of course, he would have saved himself.

Shaking his fist in my face he vowed he would hound me to my grave for this; and that when he himself should be dead he would have on my track the keenest scented old hound that ever lived. As events have turned out, I guess he has pretty successfully carried out his threat.

In November, 1884, I married and moved into a small cabin just below the Narrows, in Williams Canyon, intending to devote all my energies to the development of the cave business,

leaving the lime works to the rest of the family, but new cause for conflict arose. My brothers, Charles and Perry, now demanded that I deed the cave to Snider Brothers, as mother's money had furnished the means to buy it, and Snider Brothers had met the deferred payments, at the same time stipulating that I should get out as well.

This was the first intimation on their part that they were going to contest my right to the cave. During the several years we had all been in the business together it was never questioned that the one-half interest in the cave was mine. And when the last payment had been made, not an objection was raised to making the deed in mine and Rinehart's names. What if mother's money had made the first payment? Before then I had put into it far more than that amounted to, besides all those years of labor. In addition to which I was putting my net profits from the cave and all my spare time right into the lime business. It had always been taken as a matter of course that the cave was mine, just as the land that John, Perry and Horace had filed on for the lime business was paid for in the same way as mine, but always recognized as theirs individually. Besides, whose money was it but mother's that went to help build up the lime business? And when Horace sold his land there was no talk of making him refund the money to mother, or (before he sold it) of making the deed over to her. Now why this sudden change of front?

There can be but one answer; the cave was beginning to make money, and Perry and Charles were scheming to get in on a good thing. That I had found the cave before they had come out here; that I worked to get the family to come to Manitou with the remnant of father's fortune, and got them all into a good paying business—all this was forgotten. My marriage was now made an opportunity to throw me out.

At first they demanded that I deed the Cave lands to Snider Brothers, to which I firmly objected, but after much jangling and bitterness, we finally came to an agreement.

I will here first explain that in 1881 I had filed a pre-emption on 120 acres in Section 31, adjoining the Cave of the Winds lands, and had found thereon another underground cavern, which afterwards came to be known as the Manitou Grand Caverns, a much larger and grander cave. Soon after I was married I received my patent for this land from the government, signed by the president, Chester A. Arthur, under date of November 20, 1884.

Now to satisfy my brothers and settle the controversy, be-

ing tired of their everlasting harping on the fact of mother's money having paid the first payment on the Cave, I agreed to deed my one-half interest in the Cave to mother, in return for which Perry deeded me 40 acres of his land (the same that had cost me One Hundred Dollars in the release matter mentioned before), as it was expected that a part of the Grand Caverns would be found on it. However, this deed for the forty acres was given with a proviso, as follows:

This agreement, made the 12th day of January, 1885, between George W. Snider of Manitou, El Paso Co., Colo., of the first part, and O. P. Snider, J. W. Snider, Elmer E. Snider and Charles E. Snider of the same place, of the second part. WITNESSETH: That the said George W. Snider having purchased of O. P. Snider (one of the parties of the second part) the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section thirty-two, township thirteen, south of range sixty-seven west, from which the parties of the second part are obtaining lime stone, contracts and agrees with the said parties of the second part that they shall have the rights and privileges of all roads on said land, together with the privilege of removing therefrom all the limestone they may want.

And it is further agreed that the parties of the second part shall have the exclusive use and control of all buildings now on said land. The above agreement to extend for an unlimited time.

It is mutually agreed that all the agreements herein contained shall extend to and be obligatory upon the heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns of the respective parties.

In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands the day and year above written.

GEORGE W. SNIDER,
CHAS. E. SNIDER,
O. P. SNIDER,
JOHN W. SNIDER,
ELMORE E. SNIDER.

I, on my part, reserved the right to all caves then known, and hereafter to be discovered, on the Cave of the Winds lands, outside of the Cave of the Winds itself. This was done for my protection, as it was supposed that some of the Grand Caverns would extend into the Cave lands.

Thus, mother was to have the Cave of the Winds lands, and Snider Brothers (of whom there were now but four) were to have my interest in the lime business, while I was to have

the Grand Caverns, it being thoroly and distinctly understood by all the brothers that the Caverns were to be mine, even tho they should extend under the Cave lands.

The discerning reader will see that by these agreements all that I got out of the transaction was any part of the Caverns that may extend under the Cave lands, since the Cavern lands were already mine by act of pre-emption. **FOR THIS REASON, THE RESERVATION AS ABOVE MENTIONED WAS MADE.** In addition to this I was to have the forty acres from Perry, tho, under the proviso the Snider Brothers were to have all the lime and buildings on it, and the free use of all roads. In other words, they had all the surface rights, and I the underground rights.

I was soon to learn, however, that even this wholesale forfeiture of my rights in the Snider Brothers' interests did not satisfy my brothers. They even took possession of my horse Billy—saddles, bridle, blanket and all, leaving me but the clothes on my back. Now these were things I had bought in the early days of my sojourn in Colorado, before any of them came to the State, and to which they had not the least conceivable right. I hotly demanded that they should at least leave me something on which to start life anew. I was amazed at the lengths to which their greed had driven them, and their utter indifference as to what became of me and my wife.

So angered were they at my demanding some justice at their hands, Charles finally wrote me a most abusive letter, defending their own actions by putting all the blame on my shoulders. I submit the letter in full, for it will serve as a fine example of how guilty people always try to vilify the person whom they have wronged. Please note how brotherly it is headed and signed.

Manitou, Jan. 24, 1885.

Mr. G. W. Snider, Manitou:

Dear Sir—

1. As things are still in an unsettled condition to such an extent that the other boys and myself do not feel disposed to do anything until the matter is finally settled, and as time is being lost that should be improved, if anything is to be done at the kiln this coming spring and summer, and as the existing trouble is your dissatisfaction and backing out after everything had been satisfactorily arranged, we having accepted yours and William's propositions and given you your own way in everything, we now desire the matter to be immediately brought to a close.

2. We have not been unaware all this time that all that troubled you was your having turned over to your parents the Cave property according to your former promises, which we now believe it was never your intention to fulfill, but which you could not very well avoid under existing circumstances.

3. And as you have repeatedly since transferring the same (yes, more than an hundred times), accused them and your brothers at home, of taking or stealing from you everything you had, and kicking you out, and even gone so far as to tell the same story to people in Manitou.

4. And as you said Thursday, you have consulted attorneys on the feasibility of your recovering possession of the property. (Which, by the way, you might do until you are gray, and never succeed.)

5. These and many other things have caused us to carefully consider the whole matter. And believing you will never be satisfied so long as mother owns the Cave, and preferring peace to the Cave during their short stay with us, and desiring not to quarrel over it after they are gone, we have unanimously CONCLUDED and INSIST that you accept the following proposition and proceed at once to make out your paper as we are doing.

6. Mother will deed to you and Weddell (Horace) the Cave, you one-fourth, and Weddell one-fourth, as you said here one day not long since that Weddell was entitled to as much as you, which, no doubt, is a fact.

7. You deed to mother the forty acres Perry gave to you, and release to what NOW constitutes the firm of Snider Brothers, all your claim on all property and accounts of the OLD FIRM of Snider Brothers.

8. You and Weddell assume the mortgage on the Cave property.

9. We will pay Snider Brothers' debts, outside of what you got at Leddy's on Snider Brothers' account, (or) at Smith Bros.', and O'Brien's and any (other) accounts you have made for Snider Brothers since you married shall be settled by you.

10. We would suggest that you and Weddell share your business with William, as the income from the Cave in six months will be as great or greater than the income from the kiln in a whole year, and there will be but three of you to share it, and seven of us to share what we have here. We are aware that the division is in your favor, but you need not

fret on our account, we prefer it thus to your continued accusations and quarrelling, which is fast thickening the grey hairs on the heads of your parents.

The matter has got to be settled Monday, and we don't want you to come down here with any intention of raising a disturbance.

We will send this by Perry so that you won't fail to get it, as we want the business finished up Monday and you to be here.

Respectfully,

CHARLES E. SNIDER.

(P. S.) If you want BIG BILLY and your saddle you can have them.

I will refer to the paragraphs in the above letter by number, as I wish to comment on their context.

No. 1. Charles might have added: Satisfactory on *their* part, for I was simply giving up to their greed everything I had striven and struggled for since the early days of my coming to Manitou; and in giving up the Cave, which I had come to love as a sentient thing, I was giving up a part of my life.

No. 2. This sentence scarcely needs comment since I have already shown that father did not hold me to that promise, which I had made in perfectly good faith.

No. 3. Yes, that is correct as far as it refers to my brothers, but father and mother never figured in the matter at all. They were growing old, and my brothers never made any pretense of consulting them on any point. They had simply taken control and were running things to suit themselves.

No. 4. To be sure I did. When I found they were taking possession of things that were not even mentioned in our contract, of course I rebelled. And I said openly that I would take back everything I had given, and I said it with a good deal of emphasis.

No. 5. I knew very well that it was not a question of *Mother's* owning the cave. She was simply being used as a tool to get the cave into their own hands for their own profit, as subsequent events will abundantly prove.

No. 6. I had always claimed that Horace was entitled to as much interest in the lime business as I, and I always acknowledged my indebtedness to him for the assistance he had rendered me in my various explorations, and now they twist my words to suit their own designs.

No. 7. Wherein lay their right to say who did or did

not constitute the firm? It will be remembered how father was disposed of; now we will show how one brother after another was dropped—or kicked out, as we all graphically put it—until Charles and Perry finally assumed absolute control, with Perry master of all in the final innings.

No. 8. How ready and willing they were to deed the cave to us, *providing* we would assume the mortgage they themselves had put on it for the benefit of the lime business, in which *we* were to have no interest.

No. 9. They were still casting about to see how many burdens they could pile on my shoulders now that they had so generously decided to let me have back my cave.

No. 10. How apt at contriving everything for their own benefit is this suggestion to take in William at the Cave. That would be one less to share the profits of the lime business. To be sure, he says that seven would be left; but only *four* appear among the signatures in the contract quoted above, and before this story is ended there will remain but one to represent the firm of Snider Brothers.

“Which is fast thickening the grey hairs on the heads of your parents.” As this story develops we shall see whose actions thickened the grey hairs on the heads of our parents.

No doubt it has already been surmised that I did not accept their generous proposals. The result of all these high-sounding words and recriminations was that I got back my favorite horse Billy and the other things that I was contending for. I let them keep my other horse.

The agreement in full follows:

Know all men by these presents, that I, G. W. Snider of Manitou, El Paso Co., Colorado, for, and in consideration of my receiving: One bay horse Billy, one riding saddle, one pack saddle, one single wagon harness, and one one-horse wagon; also: one riding bridle, and one horse blanket, the receipt of which is hereby acknowledged; do hereby bargain, sell and deliver unto O. P. Snider, E. E. Snider, J. W. Snider, and C. E. Snider, all my right, title, and interest in all quarry tools, and tools at limekiln; also in the following described property:

Four horses, three wagons, and three sets double harness, all belonging to the firm of Snider Brothers.

In witness whereof I hereby set my hand this 26th day of January, 1885.

G. W. SNIDER.

All that I received in this agreement was in reality my

own personal property—things which it never entered my head they would claim as part of the bargain when I made the former agreement with them. But it now began to look as though they thought I had no right to own anything, and that whatsoever I might acquire belonged to them.

I had given up all interest in everything that mother's money had been put into—limekilns and all, receiving absolutely nothing in return for my own money and the years of labor that had gone into it, which in actual cash value amounted to a hundred times more than the disputed \$500 mother had given me.

Now that the Cave of the Winds as a means of livelihood was lost to me, I turned my attention to the opening of the Grand Caverns. I fixed up my old pre-emption cabin at the spring just below the Cavern's entrance, and moved with my wife into that.

This cabin had been built to replace my first pre-emption cabin that stood just above Rainbow Falls in Ute Pass Canyon, and had been crushed by falling boulders some years before, I myself having had a narrow escape from a like fate, having left the house but a few minutes before the crash came.

Now this second cabin was destined to be the scene of a still more thrilling escape from certain death for both my wife and myself.

We had been living here some months, while I and my men were engaged in building a road up to the entrance of the Caverns from a point in the Ute Pass road just above Rainbow Falls.

That spring of 1886 had been a pretty wet season. I had built a fifteen or eighteen foot wall to support the roadway, and because of the continued rain I began to fear for its stability. On the night of the 21st day of April, after a steady downpour of ten days or so, I cautioned my wife not to be frightened if she heard a great noise in the night, for I fully expected that wall to come down. That very night we were awakened by an awful uproar. I said: "There goes the wall;" but instead it turned out to be a rock slide from above the cabin which came crashing down on us, smashing all but the very bed in which we were sleeping. As I went to get up a rock hit me on the head, cutting quite a gash. To tell the truth, we expected death any moment, for it was so dark we were afraid to move about lest we should fall into a worse predicament. The roar of the rolling, sliding, smashing rocks was tremendous, sounding as tho the mountain itself was caving in upon us. Finally all grew

quiet, and I got up thinking to hunt for matches—a quest that proved fruitless. I concluded the safest thing would be to lie quietly in bed and wait for daylight.

The devastation wrought by the falling rock was terrific. Only enough boards remained intact to hold up the roof. A great flat slab, octagonal in shape, and seven feet in diameter, by ten inches in thickness, had come hurling edgewise thru the roof and side of the house, crushing in its path stove, chairs, tables, everything. It made its exit thru the door, cutting a hole thru it as clean as tho done by a saw, leaving one board containing the latch entirely untouched. In falling, the boulder left a big hole in the ground, and then bounded forty feet in a clear leap across the ravine, imbedding itself on edge in the opposite bank.

The shock completely paralyzed my wife for a time, and when, after daybreak, I was forced to go down to get help, I had to leave her alone amid all this debris.

Repairs were soon under way, and in a little while I was able to resume work with my force of men on the roadway.

A thoro exploration of the new caverns had convinced me that they excelled even the Cave of the Winds in grandeur, and their opening up to visitors looked like a very attractive proposition to me; tho, of course, much money would be needed for their development. On April 1st, I had effected a loan of \$400 to begin the work, on which I was obliged to pay interest at 18 per cent a month.

The work progressed satisfactorily, and before long the Caverns were on a paying basis.

A further loan of \$1,200 had been secured in May, 1885, by which I paid off the first \$400 mortgage, and made further improvements. The following September another loan of \$1,800 enabled me to pay off the \$1,200 mortgage and complete the improvements.

When the road was completed up to the Cavern's entrance I was amply repaid. The drive up Ute Pass proved to be a popular one, the panorama of mountain scenery, which included the famous Rainbow Falls, attracting tourists from every quarter.

The immense traffic that now began to come my way began to tell upon the receipts of the Cave of the Winds; the Grand Caverns having turned out to be the more popular, because more easy of access now that tourists could drive to its very entrance.

Rinehart, of course, still had his half-interest in the Cave

of the Winds; and this increased patronage at the Grand Caverns set his villainous mind to working on a scheme to frustrate all this; with the result that he instituted a lawsuit against me for a half-interest in the Grand Caverns on the ground that when I filed on the Cavern land, I had agreed that when I had proved up on it, I would turn it over to the Cave of the Winds' business.

Now the real fact of the matter was we had each agreed to file on a quarter section, together with his daughter, and that after we had all three proved up, we would each turn our land in for the benefit of the Cave of the Winds. Both he and his daughter failed to live up to their part of the agreement, never having proved up their respective claims; therefore, I did not feel that I was in any way obligated to fulfill my part of such an agreement.

His suit against me contained two other counts: one that I had used company money to pay for the Cavern lands; the other, that the Cavern itself was on the Cave of the Winds property.

I won the first suit because I had the original plat as surveyed by W. B. Sherman, the first surveyor of El Paso County, whom Rinehart and I together had employed to do the work. The correctness of this plat was afterwards corroborated by E. H. Kellogg, the government surveyor, whom I had sent for to come out to testify. He resurveyed the land and compared the survey with his original field notes and found that the so-called Snider monument was the original government monument which he himself had established. This plat showed that the Caverns were on my lands in section 31.

Tho this fact was clearly established at this trial, a later decision will show what an easy matter it is to set aside any fact when the court so desires.

Besides this decision that the Caverns were in section 31, the court refused to accept as evidence a letter produced by Rinehart, in which I agreed to turn this land under dispute over to the cave company when he and his daughter should have turned theirs, holding that such an agreement would have been illegal, as it was a violation of the pre-emption laws.

When the result of the trial was announced, Rinehart's attorney at once filed notice that they would pay the costs and take a rehearing. This notice was made verbally, as was then, and had been, the general custom.

At the rehearing, I lost the case because we found that our original plat, and all the papers we had filed as evidence, had disappeared from the archives of the court.

My attorney, on his part, now filed notice that we would pay the costs and take a rehearing.

At this juncture, I was advised to go to Denver and get Patterson, Thomas and Lee, then the best lawyers in the state of Colorado, to take my case. This I did, paying them a large retainer fee, which I afterwards changed to a still larger contingent fee. They were more than willing to take the case on these terms, as they considered it what they called, "a sure thing case."

To show how strong my case was considered, Mr. J. B. Wheeler, the banker, loaned me large sums of money (which I put into the stone and lime business), with the cavern lands as security, at the very time the suits were pending.

However, Harry Lee, after making an exhaustive study of all the circumstances surrounding the case came to me with this statement: "We believe there is a conspiracy on down there at Manitou to defraud you of the entire property. You must deed that reservation in the Cave of the Winds land to somebody from whom you can get it back after the suits are off."

I wanted to deed it to a relative in Akron, Ohio, in whom I had the greatest confidence; but my brothers persuaded me to deed it to mother, with the distinct understanding that this was only in trust, and for my protection in case Lee was right.

One might think I would now have hesitated to take any advice Charles and Perry might offer. But in those days it was not my nature to hold resentment, and rather than be at enmity with them I chose the line of least resistance and yielded to their wishes.

We did not get our case into court after all, for when the day set for the case came around, our petition for a new hearing was thrown out on a technical error, the court holding that according to law, the appeal for a rehearing in an ejectment case had to be made in writing at the time of filing notice.

When the case was called, Judge Decker, before whom the case was to be tried, said: "Gentlemen, are you ready for trial?" Whereupon one of my attorneys, Judge McMorris, signified his readiness and got up to state his case. Judge McNeil, the counsel for the other side, at once arose and insisted on a hearing, saying he had a petition to offer.

My attorney objected, but Judge Decker sustained the other side and ordered the petition read.

Judge McNeil then read the petition, which was to have the case non-suited on the ground that application for rehearing must be made in writing, and read the law to that effect. Judge McMorris jumped to his feet, saying: "Well, if it is the law, it is not the practice." Judge Decker then asked him if he had made his application in writing, to which, of course, he replied in the negative.

At this, the Judge declared the case non-suited, and the counsel for the other side immediately asked for a writ of possession. However, we at once got out an injunction restraining them from action.

In the meantime, we secured the deposition of every judge in the state, affirming our contention, that although it was the law that application for a rehearing in an ejectment case should be made in writing, it was not the practice.

We asked that the injunction be made permanent; the counsel for the other side asked that it be dissolved; and they carried the day.

We then tried to get the case into the U. S. Supreme Court, but it was decided that it was an equity case and could not be tried there. We were beaten all around.

In January, 1885, before the suit had been instituted, Rinehart had placed his half-interest in the name of his wife, Rose Rinehart. When I brought the case up again, and while the court had it under advisement, Mrs. Rinehart died, and Rinehart again came into the property, but he, too, died before the case was finally ended.

By this decision of the court a half-interest in my Grand Caverns passed to the Rinehart estate, Rinehart's daughter Emma being the only heir.

I now appealed the case to the State Supreme Court, and I here quote at length from one of the newspapers of that date, summing up the decision of that Court:

THE GRAND CAVERNS CASE.

The Supreme Court on Monday handed down a decision in the famous Grand Caverns suit affirming the decision of Judge Downer rendered last December a year ago. In that decision Judge Downer said:

I. That what is termed in the evidence the "Snider"

monument is the true government corner as established by the original government survey and is in the place where it was originally located. This fact is established by a clear preponderance of the testimony, although I cannot say that it has been established beyond all doubt.

II. That the plaintiff used reasonable diligence to discover the said monument and failed to do so before the trial at law between plaintiff (then defendant) and Rose Rinehart, plaintiff, on April 12th, 1888.

III. That under the practice in Colorado it was generally understood during the years 1888 and 1889 that in an ejectment action after the first unfavorable verdict, the unsuccessful party could obtain a new trial by simply paying the costs before the next succeeding term of the court, and that this practice was quite generally adopted by the courts and by the bar of the state.

IV. That adopting the "Snider" monument as the true corner for sections 29, 30, 31 and 32, and from that corner drawing the line between sections 31 and 32 to the township line on the south it is found that the Caverns in controversy in this suit will be in section 32. (My land).

It may be proper to add that there is no proof whatever to show that there was any fraudulent act by any party in the action at law nor is there any showing that the trial was not fair and impartial.

I am constrained to deny to the plaintiff the relief he seeks in this action for the reason briefly stated that I do not think the facts shown meet the requirements demanded by equity when it is sought to overthrow a judgment that is unimpeached for fraud.

As will be seen all facts were found in my favor, and the opinion ordered written to that effect, and if I understand aright, Judge Goddard and Judge Elliot concurred in this, and signed the opinion accordingly, but Judge Hayt refused to sign.

In reference to this decision a letter from Harry Lee, one of my attorneys, dated March 14, 1895, contains this clause: "Of course, I need not tell you how thoroly disappointed and surprised we all are at the outcome of the litigation, and we cannot understand how Judge Hayt could have taken the position which he did and refuse to be moved therefrom."

Thus it will be seen that Rinehart, by his shrewd and cunning work, obtained his one-half interest in the Grand Caverns

and the Cave of the Winds, from me, together with the improvements which I put on them, without putting a dollar into them. I claim it was done by fraud.

Soon after Lee sent a telegram saying McNeal and Austin would be down to take possession of the Caverns. I took the letter and the telegrams to Judge McMorris, who drew up and signed a stipulation whereby all parties agreed to quit lawing and go ahead and do business in a friendly manner. This he handed Judge McNeal, counsel for the Rinehart estate, who also signed it.

During the nine years this case had been in court, Mr. M. A. Leddy had been acting as receiver, having been appointed by the court to take care of Rinehart's interests at the Caverns.

I quote from a letter I received from O. P. Snider, May 7, 1912: "During the nine years Leddy was receiver his $\frac{1}{2}$ of the net profits from the Grand Caverns were only \$13,000."

Now the affair was to be turned over to Mr. Charles H. Austin, who had married Rinehart's only heir and daughter in December, 1882. (Upon Mrs. Austin's death in Denver, 1902, the Rinehart interests in the Cave and Grand Caverns passed under the control of her husband, where it remained until 1914, when he sold out to the Stock Company under whose direction the Cave is now run).

I was at home with mother when Austin and the sheriff came after the keys of the Caverns, and altho the decision of the court was admittedly the most unjust decision ever handed down in any court, I agreed to do business with Austin, but I told him frankly that if it had been Rinehart, I would have shot him down like a dog, for he had certainly carried out his threat and had hounded me already nearly to my grave.

During these nine long years of litigation, the lime and stone business run by Perry and Charles under name of Snider Brothers, had gone to smash. Because of palpable mismanagement they had been unable to weather the panic of 1892, following upon the demonetization of silver that had worked such disastrous results to the prosperity of Colorado.

They had sunk the \$22,500.00 or more borrowed from Wheeler, for which I had given the Cavern lands as security; besides all that father and mother had put into it; together with the receipts from the Cave as well. In addition to this they had put heavy mortgages on the Cave and on mother's home.

When I saw how the business was going I asked them to let me have a mortgage on the works to protect Wheeler, who had been so generous with us in the matter of loans. This they refused, and when the smash came everything was lost. From being a prosperous plant, worth \$300,000.00, it came to the point where it was bid in at sheriff's sale, if I remember right, for \$500.00.

When the business was wound up and the final adjustment made, the situation in our family was as follows: William had secured a position as foreman with the new stone company who had bought in the stone quarry; Perry was stationed in Denver, having secured some political job thru friends there; Charles, who had always represented mother's interests in the estate, was in charge of the Cave. Elmore was my right-hand man at the Caverns, and Edgar and Horace were off on prospecting trips in the mining districts. Frank and John had died in the years 1882 and 1888 respectively.

I now hoped and expected that I would be left to pursue my way in peace and be allowed a breathing spell in which to adjust myself to the new conditions, and make an effort to pay my debts.

But such was not to be the case, for in less than a week I received the following letter from Perry:

Denver, May 21, 1895.

Dear Brother George:

As I was sitting by the fire just now (it is 8 p. m.), wondering how everything and everybody was at Manitou, it occurred to me that as I had written a couple of letters to Charlie, asking for some information, as to the condition of Cave affairs, and he has told me how things are running, now as I am a deeply interested party, I thought I would write you a few lines for a little further information.

George, you know the condition that all of mother's property is in; the home as well as the Cave of the Winds is heavily mortgaged, and when I say the Cave of the Winds it includes the Grand Caverns also. And it is going to take the greatest economy, care, and perseverance to ever save them. This you must know. I have helped Charlie with all the money I had (some Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars, besides some rent money from the cottage in Manitou), to keep the interest paid up to February, 1894. I don't know how he has

paid it since that time. And if the Cave of the Winds is lost, the Caverns is lost also.

Now I think that the moneys taken in at both caves should be applied to paying this indebtedness, for if it isn't you as well as all the rest of the Sniders will soon be fired from both caves and they will pass into other hands by the foreclosing of the trust deed.

Now, George, I wish you would go and see Charlie and see if you two cannot agree on some form of management whereby we can see the property being saved instead of slipping from our grasp. I think Charlie, as mother's representative, should have control and manage the property. He has done it for years and I see no reason why he should not do it now, for you must admit that he has stuck closer to the "Old Folks" than you, I, or any of the rest of the brothers. He has done, and is doing now, all in his power to save the property, but he can't do it the way things are running now, but if you would let him have the Cavern's receipts, I know he will not only save the caves, but your home as well as mother's.

Now, George, I hope you will write me and let me know what you think about it. It will do you no injustice or harm, and you will be far better off in a few years.

Amma joins me in love and best wishes to you and Vera.

Your brother, O. P. Snider.

1224 7th St.

I ask the reader to pay special heed to this letter from my brother Perry, for upon my yielding to his wishes expressed therein, hangs all the subsequent misfortunes that befell me. He says: "Go to Charles and see if you two cannot agree on some form of management. * * * **It will do you no injustice or harm and you will be far better off in a few years.**" Note carefully what were the results to me in the years that followed, and by way of contrast, follow Perry's career and see who profited in the end by his clever manipulation of affairs.

Having by this time laid all the facts in the case before the reader, he will be at a loss to understand by what process of reasoning Perry could have arrived at the conclusion that he was the one best fitted to advise others how to manage the family's affairs. It would have been more fitting had he written me some such letter as this:

Brother George: Knowing as we do that it was your foresight and good judgment that saved the cave lands in the end, by your refusing to deed it to the Snider Brothers, but

deeded it to mother instead; and knowing also that it was thru our own poor management that we lost not only all the money mother put into the lime business, but all you could borrow on your property, together with all we could borrow on the cave lands and mother's home; and finally, in consideration of the fact that you have just passed thru these harrowing years of litigation, having saved us a one-half interest in the cave and caverns and are now in a position to go ahead and do business peacefully with Austin; it is but just that we now ask you to take the Cave of the Winds and run it jointly with the Grand Caverns until all debts are paid.

As it was, I couldn't have been in a more deplorable situation than I was then to do as he wanted me to do, saddled as I was with the Wheeler mortgage, the court costs, attorneys' fees, and other expenses entailed by the law suits just closed, and which I was paying out of the Cavern receipts. Besides we had just contracted for advertising matter for the Caverns for the next one or two years and had been at great expense on that account. I looked at the situation from every point of view, but could not see how I could help them out just then. However, I went to Charles, explaining the situation and offered to let them have the receipts from the Caverns in a year hence, as this would give me a chance to get some of my own pressing debts paid up. On this basis we came to the following agreement:

Charles was to run the Caverns jointly with the Cave of the Winds until all the debts on mother's property were paid, also the mortgage on my home and some other debts. In consideration for the use of the Caverns, he was to pay me \$50 per month until the debts were paid, then he was to return the Caverns to me.

At first he offered me \$800 a year, but I proposed on my own account to take \$600, since they had so many debts to take care of, besides offering to stay and work as guide. But this last they would not consider; they urged the point that if I stayed around people would know I still had an interest in the property, and that it would be more expedient for me to go away altogether. I yielded in this as I had in everything else, and I will state here that there never was a more faithful and honorable bargain than this one I made for the benefit of my brothers out of pure sympathy for the financial predicament the whole family was in.

Unluckily for me the year of grace I had asked for myself

was a very poor year, and the tide of travel was the slimmest we had ever experienced. However, when the year was up, I turned the Caverns over to Charles, as I had agreed, and was once more turned adrift to seek a living for myself as best I could. But it was a peaceful year for me; there was no litigation, and Austin and I got along nicely, and were the best of friends, and I looked forward again to a bright future, expecting that in three or four years the debts would be paid on mother's property and I would then soon pay my own.

How Charles kept his part of the agreement the following extracts from family letters will show.

The first is from Charles himself in which he sends me some money on our agreement, and is as follows:

Manitou, June 29, 1896.

Brother George:

I enclose herewith P. O. Money Order for \$16, \$6 of which is for books sold by Perry at Cave of the Winds, and \$10 on agreement.

Yours, C. E. S.

(Several such letters followed containing small amounts, but they soon ceased coming).

The next letter is from Perry, under date of May 18, 1906, in which he says:

When the agreement to pay you \$600 a year was made, I was in North Cripple Creek and knew nothing about it until you told me when you came up there . . . I admit that I told you that with the money handled judiciously, Charles could not only save the Caves and the home, but your home as well. I see that I was wrong . . . The reason Charles quit paying you was because he could not raise the money to pay you with.

In his characteristic manner, Perry seeks to clear his own skirts, and crawl out of all moral responsibility for the great wrong that was done me resulting from my compliance with his wishes as expressed in his letter heretofore quoted. He advances as the reason for Charles's failure to keep his agreement, his inability to raise the money wherewith to pay me. Why then, in Heaven's name did he not admit to me frankly his failure to make good, and return the Caverns to me and give me my chance to redeem myself before my creditors? In a letter written to me under date of May 10, 1901, by Arthur Cornforth, the family attorney, he says: "Had you still owned the Caverns property you would have been financially able to pay the Austin judgments."

As I stated when I turned the Caverns over to Charles in 1886 there were no judgments or litigation. After he started the new litigation the judgments Cornforth refers to resulted. If I was able to pay these, I certainly could have paid Wheeler and others. I claim it was my yielding to Perry and Charles and their subsequent action which prevented me paying.

In a later letter, written April 8, 1908, Perry, himself, seems to have suffered some short-lived pangs of remorse on my account. He says:

In regard to your getting money enough just now to fix you out with a home, I don't think it can be done. While I am free to admit that you should be provided with a home, yet I am powerless to do anything of that kind.

Note:—My home, on which I discovered and opened up the famous Ute Chief Spring, had been lost by the foreclosing of a mortgage which was given to secure a debt, half of which was an obligation of brother Charles'.

A letter from brother Elmore, under date of Dec. 13, 1908, is still more explicit in its revelation of brotherly duplicity, and self-reaching, and is as follows:

"Now, George, I hope you will quit worrying about those d—n caves. They have been the cause of all the hard feelings in the Snider family since we have had them, and I have hoped that when they are sold that the brotherhood in the family would return, but it looks as if it never would. I know, and all the rest of the family **undoubtedly know** also that you have not got what you should have had according to their promises, and in my opinion they never intended to give it to you; and if I remember rightly, I told you at the time when they put me out of there, that it was our finish, and we never would get back there; it always was my belief and it has proved to be true.

But, on the other hand, I think that every one of us should consider ourselves lucky to get a thing from the property after they have had full swing for so many years. It is a wonder to me that they have not taken the whole d—n thing. There has undoubtedly been lots of money spent there since they took possession that nobody will ever know where it went. . . . I know that you have got the worst of it, but God knows that I am powerless to do anything. Yes, I know you were promised \$600 a year when you gave up possession and if it had been up to me you would have got it.

I do not know anything about what condition mother was

in when she signed that will. I never went to see her for the reason that she allowed Perry and Charles to fire me from the Caves, and made me move from the old house after she had got me to spend my last dollar to fix it up so I could live in it. . . . And that is why I don't have anything to do with anybody that was a party to that part of the affair. And as long as I live I want nothing to do with either of them, but I am obliged to speak to them the same as I am to some other people."

These letters need no comment from me. Sufficient to say the debts on mother's property were not all paid until November, 1908; I received less than \$200 in all those twelve years on the agreement; and that Charles never returned the Caverns to me or paid any of my debts. All their subsequent actions only proved what brother Horace wrote me when he learned of the transaction. Said he: "You'll never get the Caverns back in your hands again."

And I never did. They owe me yet over \$7,000 on that agreement.

No sooner did Charles get control of the Cavern receipts than he brought new trouble upon the family in his selfish desire to get what he could for himself out of what still remained to us. He filed a suit for partition of the property and this at once precipitated a series of disasters from which we were years in recovering.

It brought on new trouble with Austin, whose interest it was to see that the Cave property be kept intact, and it cost the estate \$10,000 to settle with him, besides large attorneys' fees.

A letter from Perry under date of April 22, 1905, says:

The filing of that partition suit by Charles has caused all this trouble since 1896, and with this settlement with Austin, has cost us \$20,000 which we should have had for ourselves.

The partition suit was filed July 27, 1896, by Charles in mother's name several months after I had left Manitou.

After this partition suit had been filed, damage suits were started against me, I was constantly being advised by my brothers to keep away from Manitou lest the Rinehart estate, as well as Mr. Wheeler, should learn that I still had an interest in the Cavern, and get after me for it—referring to the reservation which I had deeded to my mother in trust for me when the law suits were first started, and which I was to have back when the suits were closed. But never in any

manner was restitution made. And when mother died and I should have had my half interest in the Cavern returned to me, as well as an equal interest with the rest of them in the Cave of the Winds, they still held the Rinehart bogey over my head as an excuse for not turning the Caverns over to me.

During this last litigation they sent a statement to me in Los Angeles by Judge Gunnell to make affidavit to, stating that the Caves never were mine, and never were intended to be mine, and that when I made the deed to mother, making those reservations, it was made against her protest, and for that reason I deeded them to her later on. I said to Gunnell, "Judge, you know I cannot do that, because I discovered the Cave of the Winds and bought that land before any of them knew anything about it; also filed on the Caverns land, and found the Caverns while they were all in Ohio." "Yes, that is so," said the Judge, "and if we cannot win that case without you perjuring yourself we will have to lose it."

In the early part of the litigation, my attorneys told me that Wheeler would, no doubt, foreclose the mortgage on the Caverns land and take it, and the chances were he would never pay the taxes. They advised me to quit paying taxes and make arrangements whereby my brothers could buy it in for me at the tax sale. Instead my brothers allowed some one else to buy it. Then Perry bought it in his wife's name, and finally sold it back to the estate for \$1,000, he alone profiting by my relinquishment of the land, by removing the building thereon and appropriating it to his own use, being none other than the house in which he is now living.

Now that I was effectually disposed of, they united their efforts to get rid of Elmore, thus leaving the two of them in sole possession of our half-interest in both the Cave and the Caverns—the thing they had long been scheming to bring about.

They kept up an incessant quarrel with mother, and made her last years miserable because she would not force Elmore out of the Caverns; tho we have seen from Elmore's own letter that they did finally succeed in forcing him out.

It seems that while Elmore was managing the Caverns, he would take the receipts home to mother, and to this Charles objected as he considered himself the custodian of all the family's income. No word now about turning over everything to mother since it was her money that was invested. Oh, no, that argument was reserved only for me.

Elmore had always proved himself absolutely trustworthy

in his relations with me, and in his management of affairs at the Caverns, and I know he believed he was doing his whole duty in turning over the Cavern receipts to mother. But as we have seen this did not suit Charles, and so Elmore was nagged at and found fault with until he, too, fared the fate that had befallen me.

That mother did not have absolute trust in Charles, is evidenced by the following incidents:

Once while living in a log cabin far up in the mountain where I was working in a mine, I took occasion to run down to see mother. She complained to me that Charles was always bringing her papers to sign. She said: "I don't want to sign them. I am afraid I will sign something I ought not to." Meaning, no doubt, such papers as mortgages and the like.

At another time she came to me crying, and putting her hands on my shoulders, said: "Oh, George! Charles shook his fist in my face because I wouldn't put Elmore out. What would poor little Ruth do? I can't see her go hungry. It would kill me!" Ruth was Elmore's little girl, and the only girl in all the Snider family, and of course mother's idol.

During mother's last illness, I was sitting with her one day, when Perry's (first) wife (who was Anna Johnson) came in, and pretending great sympathy, said: "Poor mother! This is all Elmore's fault." I replied that it was not so much Elmore's fault as it was Perry's and Charles'. At this she jumped up and snatching a cup from the stand at mother's bedside, screamed: "Get out of here, you dirty dog, you brute!" and with an angry stamp of her foot she pointed to the door, and added: "Go, you dog! Don't you dare make any insinuations against my husband!" Her tender conscience had been pricked and her angry words only revealed to me how they regarded me up at Perry's.

Mother could only turn her eyes to me and hold up her hand in hopeless terror. As for me, I regretted my words as soon as they were uttered, as it was my sincerest wish to live at peace with all of them, at least while we were at mother's death-bed. So I at once went out and looked up Perry, and relating the circumstances, begged his pardon and that of his wife.

I spent all the time I could with mother and she would say: "George, why don't you stay at the Caverns? It always does me so much good for you to come home. I don't want you

to go up into those cold mountains any more." The memory of these words stayed with me thru all my later trials and afforded me some comfort in the lonely years that followed her death, which occurred a few days after this outburst on the part of Perry's wife, on the 22d day of March, 1899.

So it was that family dissension embittered our mother's last years, and Perry's and Charles' treatment of Elmore hastened her death.

After mother's death I went back into the mountains in the Tarryall country prospecting, and worked around in various mines owned by other people.

Once while working on a claim called "The Red Skin," I sustained an injury which laid me up for some time, and has ever since been a source of trouble and irritation to me. It happened in this wise: One cold, stormy day I went up on top of the gallows to oil the shives, when the rung of the ladder broke on which I was standing, and I plunged headlong to the bottom, catching and bumping on the braces till I finally landed on top of the blacksmith shop twenty-eight feet below. The spring in the roof somewhat broke my fall and threw me off onto the ground so bruised and sore I thought every bone in my body must be broken. I cried out for help, but before other workmen could reach me I was on my feet. Finding my arms and legs were not broken I concluded I was merely bruised up so resumed my work, keeping at it for a week or more.

However, I suffered so much pain in my chest whenever I coughed, sneezed, or drew a long breath, that I finally betook myself to a doctor for an examination. "It's a case of broken ribs," he said at once. He bandaged me up and ordered a complete rest. I stayed on at the mine until I could get a man to take my place.

It was while waiting here that I saw by the Manitou paper that my brother Elmore had just suffered a serious loss by fire; his house and barn, with all their contents having been burned to the ground. I knew what dire trouble this meant for him and his family, and I hastened to collect what money was coming to me and sent him a draft for \$100. I wrote him explaining my own predicament, but assured him I would be down as soon as I was able and help him build a new house.

In reply I received the following letter:

Manitou, Colo., July 3, 1899.

Brother George:—

I received your letter containing draft, also your last

letter. The reason I did not answer was, I have been looking for you down every day.

Well, George, we were cleaned out slick and clean. We lost everything we had in the world—our clothes and grub, buggies and harness, and everything on the place, and Kit is burned almost to death and I did not have any insurance. I have been trying to settle with the Railroad Co., but I got a letter from the President this morning saying they would not do anything, so I will have to sue them.

I am living at Bert Becker's house just at present, but I don't expect to stay here long, although I don't know what I will do or where I will go. I must find some place for my family. I may put up a tent or shanty of some kind on my lot and live there as I cannot pay rent and live, too, as I have no work, and when I do work I get no pay, so I am about ready to die.

I appreciate your kindness and will never forget how willingly you would give up your last dollar to help someone else, and I hope some day to pay it back with interest. It saved our lives, and if it hadn't been for that I would have had to ask the county for help as I did not have a dollar. Bill gave me \$10 to buy grub with the day of the fire. We got some bedding and some dishes and tinware from home which helped us out, but if I could only get work I would never say a word.

There are three or four extra men at the caves, but I and my family can starve. You are the only brother I ever had. But I hope I will come out all right, but it is pretty tough.

Your brother,

ELMORE.

This letter is only one of many that show the strained relations existing in our family because of the high-handed manner in which Charles and Perry had gotten everything in their own hands, utterly regardless of the rights or just deserts of any other member of the family.

After mother's death, William and Perry had been appointed administrators of the family estate. (It was Charles' turn now to be left out). While the family's affairs were in course of settlement, I went up into Wyoming prospecting, and remained there thru the winters of 1899 and 1900, when I came down with pneumonia. The hospitals at Laramie being full, I told my friends to put me on the train to Denver and I would try to get in there.

Losing consciousness on the train to Denver, I was taken

in charge by the conductor and brakeman, who chanced to be brother Masons. When I came to, I found myself in a hospital at Denver where I had lain unconscious for a week, hovering between life and death.

Sick and penniless, I was well-nigh at the end of my life's string. My wife, Vera, was lost to me several years before, and I was now so forlorn and alone in the world, I felt that death would be a welcome messenger.

I had been in correspondence with one of the girl friends of my boyhood days back in Ohio, and now, as soon as I was able to leave the hospital, I wrote her of my illness, and received in reply a letter conveying the intelligence that she, too, had been ill with pneumonia in a hospital in Chicago at the very same time. She added that she was now, however, well on the road to recovery.

Our common trouble brought us close together, and I wrote her to come out to me where we could be married and seek our fortune together. She complied with my wishes, and we were married in Denver. Soon after we went up to Wyoming where we made our home for a brief period.

Longing to hear something from my brothers, I wrote to brother William down in Manitou, reviewing our past lives, and seeking to know if there were any prospects for the future.

Following is his reply. I give it in full, as it is really a remarkable family document, rehearsing as it does the events that piled thick and fast upon us after our advent into our new home out here in this far western country.

Manitou, Colo., May 21, 1900.

Mr. G. W. Snider,
Tie Siding, Wyo.

My Dear Brother:

I received your letter Friday evening. We had heard of your marriage, and send you hearty congratulations, and may God bless you and your new wife, and may you both live to see many happy days. And we extend to you an earnest invitation to come and see us when you come to Manitou.

You began your letter saying that you were an outcast from all your brothers excepting Elmore. Now, George, I freely forgive everything. I can honestly say that I bear you no ill-will, and I ask you to do the same by me.

You commenced by going back to the time we all came to Colorado, and I will do the same. As you stated, it was yourself and the caves that were the cause of us all coming to Colo-

rado, and I have wished many a time that I had never come. The caves are now and always have been and always will be a bone of contention. It is nineteen years ago since mother and I sold everything that was left in Ohio, and came to Colorado. Father and you wrote to mother and myself to sell everything and come. You said there was enough in the caves for us all; and so there was. But did I get any of it? No. Did I ever get anything out of the cave excepting what I worked for? No. When after I had been here a few days I saw that I would have to go to work and make a new start in the world, I started out bravely to do it without finding fault with anybody.

When the first limekiln was built, I came home and helped to build it. It was built with mother's money, and was to be a family property. I got very little pay while I worked on the kiln, scarcely enough to buy grub for my family. I worked at the kiln until it was built and they were well started in the lime business.

I then went to work at my trade, but times were hard and I had to work at anything that I could get to do. I pounded rock in the lime quarries; I shoveled dirt; anything to make a living. Finally, I could get nothing to do. My credit ran out, so I went home to my father and brothers and asked them for a little help, but they refused me. They told me that I had no interest here. The limekiln and lime business had been given to the other brothers, and I had been left out. They would not even go my security for a few groceries.

You had just got married, and was living in the little house in the canyon. I came to you and borrowed Five Dollars of you to buy a few groceries with. This was in '85. Soon after that, I got the job of cutting the stone at the Soda Spring, and from that time on I had plenty to do and prospered till I broke my leg. Then you kindly stepped in and took charge of my work for me.

While building the High School it became necessary for us to quarry our red stone, and we leased the red stone quarry. It proved to be a good thing and we bought it. The stone business prospered, and we built up a large trade.

Charles and Perry and father now saw that the stone business was a good thing and that we were making lots of money, and they commenced scheming to get an interest in it. Well, you and I were getting along nicely; our debts were being paid as fast as they became due; and we were about Eight Thousand Dollars ahead when they proposed the stock company. They

promised to put in the caves and the limekiln and all the limestone land, and we were to put in the red stone quarries, tools and machinery, book account, cash in banks, etc. We were all to share in proportion to what we had put in. I was to be made president, and was to audit all bills and sign all checks.

Father would be at the office every morning and get into my buggy and ride to the quarry with me and talk stock company to me and tell me how nice it would be to have a brothers' stock company; and that he and George and Charles always intended that the caves and everything should be family property; and that we should be brotherly and all share alike, etc.

Well, I finally consented, although it was against my best judgment. After they had got me to consent to the stock company, they concluded that it would be better to make two companies of it—a stone and lime company, and a cave company. So the Snider Stone and Lime Co. was formed and incorporated, and I was made president as agreed, and Charles was made secretary and treasurer.

So then the stone quarries and the limekilns were deeded to the Snider Stone and Lime Co., and our Eight Thousand Dollars in accounts and cash were turned over to the company. Then there was another meeting called and motion was made and carried giving the secretary and treasurer full power to sign all checks and pay all bills. All of the directors voted "yes" but myself; I kicked, but it was no use, they just laughed at me. Perry said I was nothing but a d——d stone mason and knew nothing about business. My name was "mud!" My money was gone; my stone quarry was gone; and my brothers and father who had persuaded me into this company were every one against me; you did as you pleased and I could not help myself. You turned against me and sided with the rest. And why? Because I had drawn a Thousand Dollars from the Stone Co. to pay the mortgage on my home. But I did it with your full consent and with the understanding that you were to have money from the Company to pay your mortgage when it became due. We had money to spare in the bank.

But before your mortgage became due the Stone and Lime Co. was formed and our money was all turned over to it. After this was done you demanded of me your share of the money I had used. My money was gone, I could not pay you and you knew it. You called me a thief and said I had robbed you, and you abused me every time you met me, till we finally came to blows, and you hammered my head full of holes with a rock.

The Snider Stone and Lime Co. was shortlived. The stone quarry made money, but the Denver office with Perry as manager was too much for it, and we had to borrow money. Mr. Wheeler said we could have all the money we wanted if George would give *his cave* for security. You consented and we borrowed and borrowed till Mr. Wheeler squealed. Then the panic came and we were done for.

The cave company was never organized, and I don't think you ever intended to organize it; it was simply a bait to draw me into the trap. During this time you and Elmore and Charles, I think, had charge of the caves. You were having your troubles, too. Rineharts were lawing you for a half interest in the Caverns. That was about all I knew about it. I was estranged from my brothers; we scarcely recognized each other when we met. Father's last sickness came and we came together at that time.

My health was gone; my friends were gone; and I was in debt. I have been striving hard ever since for a living, and to pay the interest on the big debt that is on my home. After the stone and lime business was entirely used up, and Perry and Charles had gotten everything in their possession, or sold what there was left, they got after you. Perry came down from Denver and went to work at the Cave of the Winds. There was not enough in that for him and Charles both, so they commenced planning to get you out of the caverns. They made promises to you which they did not keep, and got you to give them possession. Did they keep their word with you? No. Did they pay the debts as they agreed to? No, I don't think they did. I can't find out what they did with the money.

After they got possession of the Caverns, you were in the same fix I was after we had deeded away our stone quarry. They had got your property, and you could starve, that is all the feeling they have for you or *any* of their brothers. After they had finished you, they commenced on Elmore. If they could get rid of him, they would have the Caves all to themselves.

But their quarrel with Elmore was the means of shortening mother's life, and through her will I was made one of the administrators. I think we can sell the property of the estate for about Forty Thousand Dollars. The debts of the estate amount to about Fourteen Thousand Dollars. We cleared about Three Thousand last summer which is applied on the payment of the debts which would leave about Eleven Thousand Dollars still unpaid.

Mrs. Austin has not got any judgments against the estate yet, and I don't think she will unless you help her.

I showed your letter to Perry. He said he didn't care what you did. He and Charles would not give up that land. I did not see Charles or Cornforth as I did not think it was necessary. Perry said they did not care what became of the estate, they would get more out of that land than they would out of the estate. They know that piece of land is necessary to settle all disputes on the Cave lines, and whoever gets the Caves will give them a good price for it. (The land referred to is my Grand Cavern land.—G. W. S.)

Now, George, I am doing all I can for you and for the estate. The estate is in the hands of the court and the administrators to be settled up. The debts must be paid first, and then if there is anything left it will be divided according to the will.

Mrs. Austin wants your testimony; she wants you to swear that you deeded the Caves to mother to keep her from getting them. Now you have already testified that you deeded the Caves to mother because mother's money paid for them, and they really belonged to her. Now don't you see that you will be arrested for perjury and sent to prison if you testify for Mrs. Austin?

Now, George, I think that you had better stay with your brothers. I will see that you get as much as Elmer or Weddell or Ed or myself; and if you want mine you can have it. I know that some of the other boys feel the same way.

May 24:—Now, George, I have written you quite a long letter. I want you to think these things over. Think of the discord and trouble and bad feeling there has been among us brothers since we came to Colorado. I think if we tried we might get along better together. Why is it that this quarrelling must go on from year to year? Will it ever end this side of the grave?

Yourself and Perry and Charles have always handled the Cave money. There has been lots of it, but what has become of it? Where is it? I don't know. There are no records to show how much was taken in or what became of it. There were Three Thousand Dollars saved last summer, and that would never have been seen, if I had not been there. It would be the same as it always has been; nothing to pay debts with, and those that were away would never know what was taken in or what became of it.

Well, I must close my letter. I have written more than I intended to when I started. If you think best to side with Mrs. Austin, do so, I can't help it.

I saw Cornforth last night. He wants to see this letter, but I am not going to show it to him. Perry and Charles want to find out what I am writing to you, but it is none of their business.

With best wishes to yourself and wife, I bid you goodby.

Your brother as ever,

W. H. SNIDER.

William's letter is truly a masterpiece in so far as it relates to family history, but, unfortunately, it is a one-sided argument, and does not reveal his own short-comings that were the real reason for his having been left out in many of the family deals.

In his reference to the red stone quarry, he wilfully misrepresents the actual circumstances, in that he conveys the idea that we each put in an equal amount of money; whereas, he had absolutely nothing to put in, and the entire burden fell on me. In the first place, I loaned him \$500 to give him a start when he got the contract to do the stone-work for the new school at Manitou, besides letting him use my team, I, paying the driver and care of the team. This amounted to about \$400 more—all of which was a dead loss to me.

After the injury to his leg, it threw him still further into debt with me, for, standing in dire need of money for medical assistance, he was obliged to use the money already paid on his estimates, instead of paying his workmen. I had to settle these bills myself, and before I was thru with it, I was in for about \$2,000.

William always professed the deepest gratitude for this timely assistance, and asserted time and again that if he ever got anything out of the Caves he would repay me.

In buying the stone quarry, I borrowed \$5,000 from the First National Bank in Colorado Springs. At the request of Mr. J. B. Wheeler of Manitou, who wanted our business, this note was afterwards transferred to the Wheeler Bank in Manitou, I giving the Cavern lands for security.

As William states we did do a good business, and built up a large trade, but this was largely due to my putting in all my profits from the Caverns.

One day, our bookkeeper, Mr. Hart, who acted in that capacity for both the Lime Co. and the Stone Co., came to

me with the statement that whereas I was putting in at the rate of \$100 a day, William was taking out \$50 a day, and that something ought to be done to check him.

William had also got me in a predicament at the bank by drawing on our funds for \$1,000 and interest wherewith to pay the mortgage on his home, leaving less than \$400 on deposit to cover our payroll of about \$2,000 that Saturday. At this juncture, Charles came to my aid by depositing check of Snider Brothers Lime Company for \$1,500 to cover the needed amount, and so saved the day for me.

It was this sort of procedure on William's part that brought about the talk of consolidating the two companies. Although it turned out to be a disastrous enterprise for us all, it put a check upon William's mad expenditures occasioned by his having at this time erected a fine new home, which, together with the furnishing of it, and the laying out of the yard, entailed large expense.

He was made foreman at the quarry and drew his \$100 a month, as did Perry and Charles; but the power to draw on the company's funds at will was of necessity taken from him.

A letter from brother Charles dated Jan. 18, 1910, throws a little more light on William's relations with the red stone quarry affair:

"You will remember how the lime business had proved a dismal failure. How Perry, John, Elmer and myself shouldered the debt, and how Perry and I put our shoulders to the wheel and with very, very hard work, and many sacrifices put it on a paying basis; built another kiln and were making money. Had paid the old debt and had several thousand dollars in the bank. How in the meantime you had got badly in debt, and under William's management it was getting worse, and you came to Perry and me, told us the condition of your business, and asked us to consolidate our lime business with the stone business, in order to get the management out of William's hands and save you. We agreed to do it; the consolidation took place; each brother was taken into the new company, and the result was we lost all, even the 160 acres of Caverns land, as it was called. And all because we were brothers and working for the common interests of all."

No doubt William justified to himself his own shortcomings by balancing against them the injustices he himself had suffered at the hands of his brothers. As for instance when

in his capacity as administrator he used funds of the estate for his own private ends; or, when at the death of brother John he refused to turn over his share of the inheritance to apply on family debts, as the rest of us had done.

In after years when the Lime & Stone Co. had gone to the wall and its affairs were being wound up, I was asked if I was going to put in a claim for back wages due me. Seeing how hopeless the situation was, and wishing that the affair might be settled to their best advantage, I renounced my claims and signed an agreement to that effect.

At William's death, which occurred in Manitou July 6, 1901, Perry was left in absolute control of the Snider one-half interest in the Cave. As this is just what he had been working for all these years, he had at last reached his goal.

William left his interest in the family estate to his wife in trust for his three sons, Samuel, Ford and Clyde. A remarkable chapter in the family history is her requittal of this trust, for upon her death in 1913, it was found that she had deeded this interest to her favorite son, Clyde; cutting off absolutely her other two boys. Her excuse for this show of flagrant favoritism was that the other two boys had left home to look out for themselves, while Clyde had always stayed with her. Specious reasoning, indeed, for giving away an interest that was not hers to give, being an inheritance from the father's side and only held in trust by her for the three boys.

This act was especially unfair to Ford, for he had really been the best boy of the three, as his mother had admitted to me about a month before her death. He had been earning his own living since he was 14 years old, and besides, while working for his father, he had left his earnings in his father's care meaning to use it some time wherewith to get an education. This had amounted to something over \$400, and of this, too, Clyde now had the benefit; not to mention all that he owed to me for the sums that I had lost thru his father, over \$7,500, and which should have been considered a debt of honor, to be paid as soon as he was able to do so, as his father had promised should be done.

Sam's side of the story is brought out in an interview I had with his widow, Mrs. Frances Snider, of Manitou, on September 15, 1915, at which time I elicited from her the following story with respect to her husband's death, and her

comments in reference to the treatment she had received at Clyde's hands. She said:

"Sam died at Juarez, Mexico, October 2, 1914. I wired Clyde twice but received no reply. The third time I demanded a reply, to which Clyde responded he had no reply to make. I asked for money with which to bury my husband—money that was rightfully his, for there was still \$200 coming to Sam from the twelve shares of cave stock to which he had fallen heir at the death of his Uncle Ed. But this was refused. So Sam was put underground in an old blanket in a pauper's grave without even a box.

"It was a good thing I kept track of Sam, otherwise his family would never have known what became of him; whether he was living or dead.

"Sam was at his mother's bedside when she died. She told him she forgave him all his wrong doings, and gave him her blessing."

However, to turn to the thread of my narrative: Shortly after my marriage, my wife and I, finding the climate of Wyoming did not agree with us, decided to go to Long Beach, California, in the hope that it would result in a better state of health for us both.

My wife had some property which she disposed of, and I sold some stock I had in Cripple Creek mines. With this money we acquired a one-fourth interest in a mine on the Mojave Desert in California, together with Horace and two other men.

In taking up our life on this desert we built a tenthouse near the mine, which was located about twelve miles out from Victorville, being a dry and barren spot, void of water.

Here brother Horace now made his home with us. We two, as a rule, had always gotten along well together, helping each other when we could, and sharing our troubles when things went wrong. When I owned the Caverns, and the receipts were good, I grubstaked him along in his ventures. So here in California we again shared our fortunes and misfortunes, getting along as best we could; and I must confess that for the most part it was pretty hard grubbing, for the mine proved to be utterly worthless. In fact, before we were thru with it we were reduced to very meager living. Fresh meat, in particular, had become an unknown quantity, and fresh meat just then seemed about the only thing worth living for.

One day a way out occurred to Horace. Taking down a whip that hung there useless, he went out, saying he could make a wiping rod for a gun out of that old stock and get fifty cents for it. Some time after he returned with a nice cut of fresh meat. He had made the rod and invested the proceeds in the much coveted piece of meat—the first in weeks.

After that we were indeed down to bedrock. To obtain even the most meager means of sustenance, we resorted to a scheme, which, tho it brought us but the modest pittance of \$25 in return for several weeks of hard labor, still it kept life in our bodies that winter.

The way of it was this. Horace and I each owned a one-fourth interest in another mining claim. The law required \$100 worth of assessment work each year to be done on a claim to hold it down. The other two men interested in the mine were absentee owners, and of these, one, we knew, would refuse to pay for the work, but we knew the other one would pay, so, in ill health as I was, we agreed to do the entire \$100 worth of assessment work for the \$25 he would pay us for doing his share. We did this, not to hold the claim, for we realized by this time that it was worthless, but simply to get the \$25 to tide us over our desperate situation that winter.

The pinch of poverty was felt in more ways than one. My dues as a member of the Royal Arch Mason of Colorado Springs were in arrears, and I was obliged to explain to them my situation. In reply they sent me a receipt for my dues, together with a cash remittance of \$10. Never was money more needed. For what with the illness of both myself and wife, and owing for our actual living expenses, I was hard pressed indeed.

It was but human that I should contrast my then situation with what it would have been had it not been for the machinations of my brothers in Colorado, who had seemed bent upon wresting from me every bit of property to which I had been able to lay claim. In turning over the Caverns to Charles I had relinquished my last possession, since my home, too, the mortgage on which he had pledged himself to pay, was now lost to me.

All these misfortunes fairly stunned me, and I wrote a bitter, accusing letter to Perry. The tenor of his reply was none too soothing, and from then on there passed between us nothing but a constant stream of invective and counter-accu-

sation, the breach between us widening with the years. The same was true of Charles. Once having assumed control of affairs, they never could be made to admit that their course of action had been arbitrary from first to last, and they bitterly resented any intimation to the contrary; resorting to abuse and vilification whenever I appealed to them for help or justice.

We were eventually forced to sell our mining claim on the desert, coming out about even in the transaction.

About this time an oil excitement started in that locality and we made enough money locating and surveying oil lands for others, to put us on our feet. After paying our debts we had some money left and my wife and I tried the expedient of running a chicken ranch. We bought a little two and one-half acre plot of ground in San Gabriel, and built up quite a respectable business. However ill-luck still pursued us. The wretched condition of the health of both my wife and myself, forced us out of this venture, and we sold out taking as part payment a rooming house in Los Angeles. This proved even more disastrous than the ranch, and we were glad to dispose of it for a few hundred dollars. We ventured once more, and this time with better luck. With what money we had remaining to us, we grubstaked my brother Edgar in a mining venture in Goldfield, Nevada, we to have a one-half interest in whatever he should make out of it.

It turned out well, and we realized \$1,100 more than we had put into it.

An incident connected with this Goldfield mining venture is so strongly impressed on my mind I cannot forego recording it here.

My wife had decided to go on a visit to her sister in Ohio, while I went to Goldfield to visit brother Ed and have a look at the claims where our money was invested. I arrived at Goldfield on July 3rd, 1907, an intensely hot day, the thermometer registering 110 degrees in the shade.

I well remember the day, for there was great excitement in Goldfield over the discovery of gold there, and the place was thronged with spectators.

I met brother Ed who had rooms upstairs over a place known as the Kyle Detective Agency, and we made our way thither thru the throngs of excited people. Leaving my traveling bags and camping outfit in Ed's rooms, we put in several days looking over our claims. On the 8th of the same

month, we went downtown and found the streets still thronged with people, and we stopped awhile to see the sights and watch the "Bullfrog" stages that were doing a land office business there. Photographers were everywhere snapping the vivid scenes presented to their view.

Suddenly there was a cry of fire, and in a moment we realized that it was in the direction of our room. We hurried along with the crowd and learned that a tank of gasoline had exploded within half a block of the place. A big frame building just opposite was on fire and the flames spreading rapidly. We saw that the house in which we had rooms was doomed, and we made a dash for it to secure my traveling bag which contained our mining stock. In addition to this we had the camping outfit to look after, for we had planned a camping trip and had everything in readiness for that.

Brother Ed seized the bundle containing the outfit, and I the grip and my rifle and started to run, but Ed turned back with a warning cry that the whole building was on fire and we could not get out that way. I could see the fire sweeping towards me, window panes breaking from the heat, and every avenue of escape seemingly cut off.

Then I remembered that a back stairway led down to the rear yard, and I yelled to Ed to go that way, and started to run. He yelled to me to drop the grip I was carrying and to try and save myself.

The grip had come open and everything in it had fallen out except that mining stock, which fortunately I had put in a separate compartment of the grip which did not open readily. With a grim determination I hung on to that and fought my way thru the flames, finally making my escape much scorched and bedraggled.

Fortunately I swallowed no fire, but my ears and hands were badly burned, and my eyebrows and hair singed to a crisp, so that it was a month or more before I fully recovered from the effects of that experience. Brother Ed was more fortunate than I in having been about thirty feet ahead of me in getting out of the building and was not so badly burned.

During the four years that my wife and I were interested in the mines at Goldfield, we lived at San Diego, trying to make a living from poultry, fruit and garden truck, in addition to which I worked up quite a little business on the side mowing lawns and tending yards. We were fairly successful but sadly hampered by the failing health of us both; our profits going

to pay doctors' bills and for buying medicine. What little money we had left we had put into a home, running in debt for the balance, amounting to about \$2,000.

By some family arrangement I had been given a one-sixth interest in the family estate, and this interest I now felt obliged to dispose of in order to get the debt on our home paid off, so that I might be put in a position to earn a livelihood for myself and wife, who was now a confirmed invalid.

I had opened the subject with Perry, desiring to know what was the best they could do for me. At all times it seemed to be Perry's policy to belittle the Cave's earning capacity to me, writing me gloomy reports of the bad seasons and poor receipts, until I had been led to believe the Caves were proving to be rather a poor proposition, and that I would be doing well to get \$10,000 for my interests. He even appeared doubtful of his ability to borrow the money to enable him to buy me out. Ed's health had been failing him, and he came down from Goldfield to visit me while under the doctor's care.

But one day by the merest chance a letter from Perry to Brother Ed fell into my hands, which shed a different light on the affair, and showed me that they were only too eager to buy me out at this price. The letter follows:

Manitou, Colo., July 4, 1909.

Brother Ed:—

Your letter of the first, arrived this A. M. and as I am at home alone this P. M. I thought I would just answer it at once. I do wish you had come here this summer as I could have used you nicely, besides I think you should become acquainted with the running of the business, and if you were here, you could take right hold at the Cave and see just how we get the people and their money. It isn't too late to come yet. While I have put Clyde in charge for the present, there is going to be the biggest tourist travel here we have ever seen, and I would be glad of your assistance.

As to George if you boys are all willing that I should pay 8% interest, I can get the \$10,000 necessary to buy him out * * * Now I don't want to try to influence any of the boys, but Ed, I believe that would be the best buy we could ever make * * * I have written him asking if he would sign a quit claim deed to everything in case I arranged to buy him.

If you need the \$105 in September, just holler. I want to show you something. Look at this: June, 1908, \$3,237.75.

June, 1909—\$4,355.50. \$1,117.75 to the good. We are running better than \$100 a day ahead of last July so far this month, and I can't see anything but a washout in the canyon to stop the business. * * *

Your Brother Perry.

By way of contrast to this glowing account of business at the Cave, I submit a letter written to me on the same day, but in an entirely different vein.

Manitou, July 4, 1909.

Brother George:—

* * * We are having severe rains every afternoon, and it hurts business quite a little, washes the canyon badly, tho not impassable yet. But if it keeps up, it will wash us out sure. We keep men at work on road most of the time. The rains commenced Saturday afternoon, and get a little worse each day.

Your Brother Perry.

I felt outraged at the duplicity that was being practiced toward me, and bitterly resented Ed's being drawn into it. I put it squarely up to him when he again returned to the house. I told him I could not have believed he would have been a party to a scheme of Perry's to take advantage of my impoverished condition to force me to sell my interest at a figure far below its real value.

He flared up at this, saying: "By G-d! If that is what you think of me, you'll never get another damn cent out of me, or ever see me again!" With that he left the house.

It was indeed the last time I ever saw him alive, for he met his death by accidental shooting a few days after this in Los Angeles.

In a subsequent letter from Perry, dated July 21, 1909, he writes:

It seems too bad that you quarrelled with him (Ed) so cruelly when he left you for the last time. How much better you would feel if you had parted as brothers should * * *

That was always Perry's way. To stir up trouble and then point the accusing finger at the one who suffered most by his underhanded methods.

I maintain that these letters written by Perry precipitated the break between Ed and myself, but for which, Ed would never have left me in anger and strayed into the very path of the bullet that ended his life.

During the settling up of Ed's estate I found a number of letters in his trunk in Los Angeles, among them letters from Brother Perry containing references to the big annual increase in business at the Cave. As Perry's letters to me had conveyed quite different reports, it will be interesting to quote from them to show up still further the habitual double dealing practiced by him:

Manitou, Colo., May 9, 1909.

Brother Ed:—

* * * It now looks as tho we were bound to have the biggest season for tourists that Colorado has ever had, and of course the Cave will get a good proportion of them, so I look for the BIG year for us. There are more tourists coming and going now than ever before.

June 3, 1909.—We are having very bad weather here; rain and wind every day, yet with all the disagreeable weather we are having a great run of visitors. We ran \$365 ahead in May, and for the first two days of this month we have \$265 as against \$93 for the first two days of last June. I certainly can't account for it, but everybody that comes here goes to the Cave. And I fear now that we will not be able to handle the people in July and August if the present ratio of increase keeps up.

June 24, 1909.—Ed, you will be surprised at the increase in business. I can't realize it hardly, but we certainly are getting the money. How is this: The first 22 days of last June, \$1,982.75; the same period this June, \$2,940.75. How is that for an increase.

It would be well to state here that after I had turned over the Caverns property to my brothers to run for the benefit of the family, it was only a matter of a few months before they closed them to the public, thus diverting all the tide of travel to the Cave of the Winds. This to my mind is evidence enough that it was done to keep me from ever coming back to claim my rights. That it proved a great money making proposition is shown from the foregoing citations.

In connection with this, I quote as further evidence a letter from Perry written less than a year later, in which he cites some very edifying statistics:

Manitou, Colo., Feb. 19, 1910.

Brother George:—

I am mailing you today with this a newspaper containing an article on the sale of Cheyenne Canyon. You see by the

receipts for the past five years how they compare with the Cave receipts.

	Cave of the Winds	Cheyenne Canyon
1905.....	\$24,541.20.....	\$30,463.45
1906.....	24,211.75.....	24,463.45
1907.....	28,417.75.....	24,555.63
1908.....	33,213.85.....	23,747.49
1909.....	47,123.85.....	26,767.60

Just compare those receipts, and see how much faster we are growing than the other fellow; also the price they are getting and the price we ask.

Your Brother Perry.

Notwithstanding such record breaking receipts, Perry and Charles did not succeed in paying off the debts on mother's property until 1908. And in all those years (since 1896), had never cancelled a debt of mine or paid me the \$600 a year agreed upon; and not a penny did I receive from Cavern or Cave after 1886, until the year 1908 when the first dividend was declared, and all the brothers began to share equally in the net receipts, what I received having come to me thru my brother Ed. (But the Grand Caverns were never restored to me.)

In reply to a letter I had written Elmore complaining about the stand not being run for our mutual benefit, and the always increasing running expenses at the Cave. In part it is as follows:

Manitou, Colo., Jan. 25, 1910.

Brother George:—

I think we are in big luck to have anything left considering the shape the property was in when you left them. There were thousands of dollars of costs and attorneys fees, and it took \$10,000 cash to pay Austin to stop the litigation. You lost the law suit with Rinehart and lost the Grand Caverns and I think you would have lost it all if you had not gotten out when you did. Now this may not sound good to you, but it is true, and Rinehart and Austin would never have let up on you as long as you had anything to fight for. I ask the reader to note the difference in this letter, and those of July 3, 1899, and December 13, 1908.

Now I must impress on my Brother Elmore's mind and all the rest of the Sniders, that as I have shown there was

no litigation on the Caverns when I loaned them to Charles at Perry's request, but this is the way they all slam these false charges at me to cover up the great wrong they have done me by taking advantage of my misfortunes and the trust I placed in Charles and Perry, but it would not have been so bad had I been allowed to work for them.

The estate having been thru the courts in course of settlement, its affairs were now distinctly in the limelight, and a strict accounting of all receipts and expenditures was exacted. But in spite of the fact that Perry and Charles had enjoyed all the receipts from the Caves during those years, besides plunging the estate in debt about \$14,000, they were still putting in bills for back pay when the estate was in the courts.

I made the point that if their bills for back pay could go in, I would put in my claim, too, for back pay—meaning what they owed me on their agreement to pay me \$600 a year for the use of the Caverns, and which now amounted to over \$7,000.

This request of mine for a just and lawful settlement of my claim seemed to have an effect on Charles such as a red rag has on a maddened bull.

He jumped angrily to his feet, and pointing his finger at me he bellowed: "You dasn't! You dasn't! If you do Wheeler or Austin will get it!" How he seemed to exult in the fact that they had now put me in a hole where I should have to stay put!

It was his suing for a partition of the property in 1897 that started the new law suits against me, as a result of which such judgments were returned against me as to compel me to resort to the bankruptcy law to escape them. Being penniless myself, they sued my bondsmen, the principal one of whom was my mother.

Some of the judgments obtained at that time were bills for printing that I had contracted for, but for which Charles had pledged himself to pay, it being matter he would use in advertising the Caverns.

There were also claims filed against me that had no foundation in fact. Not being there to defend myself, anyone who wanted to put in a claim, did so and secured judgment. One of these judgments was granted to a young man whom I befriended when he was in poor health. Not only did I give him work when I did not need him, but I also took him with me in my drives about the country. I paid him \$3.00 a day for his work during the height of the season, and \$2.00 a day when

business was not so good, and I looked after him in every way so that his health might be benefited. This I did for seven years. When I left the Caverns I paid all my help in full, and if he was not paid, I cannot understand how he was left out. Now when I was down and out, I found him putting in a claim against me for \$60.00 and interest for unpaid wages. I am positive I did not owe him this, and if he worked at the Caverns after I left, his claim should have been against Charles.

The settlement of the family estate was a long and tedious matter, and Perry was put thru the mill of rendering an account to the court of all receipts and expenditures during that period.

There is no record or accounting of the money taken in at the Cave of the Winds from 1884, when Perry and Charles assumed control, or of the Caverns from 1896, when I turned them over to Charles, until mother's death in 1899, except that the mortgage had increased from \$1,500 in 1884, to about \$14,000 in 1899. To which may be added other claims that they filed against the estate after mother's death for back pay.

After her death Perry's reports show that he received \$11,671.33 for his services up to the time that the first dividend was paid in 1908. At that date we all signed an agreement that Perry should continue as manager of the estate and receive \$1,200 a year for his services, he to run it to the best interest of us all.

The expediency of selling the Caves property to outside parties was often discussed, but all negotiations fell thru, until in 1914 a definite decision was reached to form a stock company. The Snider interests were to continue, and the Austin interest to be taken over by new members.

An accounting I made from Perry's reports shows that he had received very close to \$40,000 during the years he had control from 1899 to June 17, 1914, when the new stock company took over the business. These figures include the following items: Salary (himself and wife), \$21,192.65; dividends, \$8,600.35; still owing from the estate \$1,100; \$8,000 to \$10,000 cleared from the souvenir stand and lunch counter during the past eight years, (while I was rustling for a living at anything my age and health would permit me to do).

The history of this souvenir stand forms another interesting chapter in the story of Perry's remarkable achievements.

This stand had a small and unpretentious beginning. Horace's little son Arthur first conceiving and carrying out

the idea. Now after a year or two of successful business, Perry perceived its money making possibilities, and contrived in his usual manner to oust the little originator of the plan, and get it into his own hands, under his wife's management. Later Mr. Hooper, who was representing Austin's interests at the Caves, went halves with him and they put in a larger stock and better equipment. From then on it was Perry's studied effort to prevent anyone's knowing how big a thing he was getting out of this concession.

On the rare occasions of my visits to the Cave during the years the stand was in operation, I could see for myself what a profitable institution it had become, and my contention was that it should be made a company affair. Perry was already in the enjoyment of a good salary in his capacity as manager of the estate, besides drawing an equal dividend with the rest of us, and I could see no good reason for allowing him to use the wonderful drawing power of the Caves for his own private advantage.

Nor was this all; he did not hesitate to divert to his own private gain the proceeds from the sale of valuable specimens from the caves themselves which came to light when opening up new rooms and making other changes, having myself paid cost for a scarf pin made of this material.

I did not realize the immense income he was deriving from these sources until he made a remark one day that effectively opened my eyes. He said: "Well, I am going to stay home this winter and buy an auto. I have not spent a winter in Manitou for ten years, and every winter trip costs me more than the price of that machine; indicating the one we were then riding in, on a demonstration trip, the cost of which was between \$1,200 and \$1,400. (N. B.—He bought the auto and took the winter trip also).

The subjoined letters throw such an interesting sidelight on this chapter that I quote from them to give a better understanding of the situation.

The first is from Charles, who always played second fiddle to Perry, and now uses his best endeavors to show why Perry should be allowed to run things to suit himself.

Denver, Colo., March 18, 1913.

Brother George:—

* * * About the store at the Cave I will say: I have discussed the subject with Perry the past winter; he wrote me about it, asking my opinion as to what was the best thing

to do concerning the running of the store. I told him that before I could express an opinion I would have to know how much was being made from it by him and Mr. Hooper. He wrote me that they made about \$900 between them last year, and out of that he paid his rental for the store privilege, leaving him \$300 for his share of the profit.

This is not very much, and taking all things into consideration, is not leaving him much, if anything. * * *

Your Brother Charles.

The second is from Perry in which he gives his version of the profits received:

Brother George:—

You seem to think that the store is a great deal more than it really is. Last year we cleared less than \$1,000, Hooper and I together, not \$500 each. I paid \$150 rent, What did I get out of it. If the boys want the store (which they don't), I will sell them the show-cases, horse and wagon, and all stock. Then I will charge up all expense money. I so took the matter up with some of the boys, and none of them was in favor of it.

Your Brother Perry.

The next two are from Clyde, who had his own reasons for showing up the real situation as to the profits from the stand:

Manitou, Colo., May 5, 1913.

My dear Uncle:—

* * * I spoke to Perry about the letter Charles had written you regarding the stand and its profits of \$300 each. I told him that I thought Charles must have made a mistake. He said, no, that was correct. I told him it looked small to me, and finally he admitted that **his profits** were \$900, instead of \$300 for the last year.

I find by looking over the stand books that his profits run between \$900 and \$1,000. That was what he made above all expenses.

I haven't been to Denver, but the first time I see Charles I am going to talk to him regarding that letter. * * *

Your Nephew Clyde.

Denver, Colo., Nov. 26, 1913.

My dear Uncle:—

* * * Perhaps it will interest you to know what the

stand business amounted to from May to October, 1913, six months. \$6,077.50. I have shown statements to Charles, and he feels as tho things have been misrepresented to him. We should run this business ourselves. * * *

Your Nephew Clyde.

In a talk with Mr. Hooper after he had sold his interest in the stand to the stock company, he made the statement that he and Perry had cleared more than \$1,500 a year from that stand for the last eight years.

It is evident from this revelation of the profits realized by Perry out of the stand, that affairs would have to come to a head. We were all agreed that a stock company would solve many of the problems confronting us, and to this Perry had to accede. The Austin one-half interest passed into other hands, and we and the incoming members took over the stand business and it is now run in the interest of all its members, and the dividends materially increased thereby. Even Perry had admitted to me once in a burst of confidence, while on a visit to Los Angeles, that if we should turn the Cave business into a stock company, and take over the stand concession, that dividends would be increased several hundred dollars yearly. Subsequent experience amply bears out his statement.

Perry still has the management as all the company felt that his long experience there best fitted him for the position. But there is a strict accounting kept, and there are no more winters in Corpus Christi, and other fashionable winter resorts, while his unfortunate brother who made possible all this wealth, reduced to penury and broken in health, might ask in vain for even the chance of earning a livelihood by being given work at the Cave. This has happened not once but many times. One occasion I will remember. I think it was in the spring of 1898, after a long run of hard luck up in the Tarryall country. I was ill and positively hungry from lack of the barest necessities of life.

I had heard that the State Teachers' association was to hold a convention in Colorado Springs, and thinking there might be a good opening to be taken on at the Caves as a guide, or at least to get work in some capacity, I went down to Manitou. Meeting brother Perry on the street by Davis' drug store, I told him my hard luck story and struck him for a job. He said that he had already hired all the men he could use, and he knew that Charles had, too, as he had told him so the night before.

Manitou, Colo., July 25, 1916.

This morning about 10 A. M. Mr. Beecher Davis came in to see me, it being the first time I had seen him, since the time Perry hired him that evening, 18 years ago, in conversation I called his attention to this occurrence he said, yes I remember it very well, while I don't remember the exact words, I know I got the job and took the stone out of the road as you say, but I don't know what you and Perry said before I appeared.

Knowing him as well as I did I might have been prepared for this rebuff, but I was staggered by what followed: For at that very moment a relative of his wife's, Beecher Davis, by name, came along, and seeing Perry asked him for a job. Perry told him he could use him on the roadway as they wanted to get it cleared from stones. Thus *he* got his job for the asking. But there was no work for me. No, he had gotten me out of the way, and he was going to keep me there. This happened not once but many times.

Some years later I was back in Manitou, having gone there to look after the settling up of brother Ed's estate.

These intervening years had been a hard struggle for me, and now tired of the conflict, broken in health and fortune, I felt what a blessed peace would be mine, if I could be permitted to settle down once more in old Manitou, take my rightful place at the Cave and live in peace and amity with my brothers. I broached the subject to Perry one day as we were out riding. He had been pointing out to me the improvements that had taken place at the Cave, and expiating on future prospects. I seized the opportunity to ask if a place could not be made for me at the Cave. I was amazed at the outbreak my request called forth. Thumping his knee with his clenched fist, he said with an oath. "No, you can't have a job there. There are too many Sniders there now; and furthermore Austin would never consent to it!"

No doubt there were too many Sniders there. Too much surveillance would be a bad thing for his interests. One by one we other brothers had been frozen out. Now that he was alone and having things all his own way he was not going to permit all his labors in this direction to come to naught.

This point blank refusal was a severe blow to me in my then weakened condition, and sadly enough, I returned to my exile in California with a broken heart.

Several years passed before I again put the proposition

to him but this time it was with no expectation of a favorable reply. It was only done out of a feeling of curiosity as to how he would take it after this lapse of time. It was in the spring of 1915, and I was considering a return to Manitou. I wrote Perry of my intention, and told him that I thought I would take time by the forelock and get in my application for a job before the places were all filled.

As I expected, Perry ignored this request, but his silence did not prevent my visit as planned. My wife and I rented a modest little tent-house almost within a stone's throw of the pretentious house occupied by Perry's folks. The relations between us were now strained almost to the breaking point, and I did not undertake to change them in any way.

I took a sort of mournful pleasure in roaming over the scenes of my early struggles here in Manitou, and recalling the triumphs that were mine in the days when the boys were so proud to be known as the brothers of the man who had discovered the Cave of the Winds.

One morning I was walking from my little tent home up to the gate opposite the Cliff House, when I encountered Clyde and four of the employees at the Cave. As I observed Clyde leisurely wending his way to his daily occupation of doing nothing, radiant and self-satisfied in his fine attire of latest cut, there flashed before me a mental vision of his only living brother Ford in his oily and soot-blackened overalls, toiling amid the noisome odors and smoky interior of the gas works in Los Angeles, eking out a bare existence; of his brother Sam in his blanket shroud, mouldering away in a foreign pauper's grave; and at these sad memories my eyes filled with tears, my heart ached, my throat choked with the sting of it.

As I was musing on these things, along came Perry and his wife in their \$1500 car and gathered up the party on their way to the Cave.

Why was I not one of them?

My thoughts turned back to the day thirty-four years before when my eyes first rested on the wonders of those underground chambers—the first in all probability to have ever penetrated their hidden depths.

I reflected upon the changes time had brought about. How my name had been obliterated from the annals of their discovery, my person banished from their halls, and I murmured almost aloud, Perry, why did you do it?

In my walks I encounter old friends and they say: How is it that you are not at the Cave any more?—How did Perry

get your property?—How much did the boys pay you when they bought you out?—Why, you used to be the backbone of the whole Snider family. They owe to you all they've got, etc.

I can but reply that it is a long, long story, and that some day it may all come out.

How an ordinary person might size up the situation may best be shown in letters from Wheeler, to whom I had written for facts relating to my transactions with him relative to money I had borrowed to put in the Stone and Lime Company, and for which I had given the Grand Caverns Land as security.

They are as follows:

Manitou, Colo., January 29, 1915.

Mr. Geo. W. Snider, 3546 Temple St., Los Angeles.

Dear Sir:—

Looking up the papers pertaining to the Snider Stone & Lime Company, has delayed my reply to your favor of the 19th inst.

I find only one note of \$1,500, dated May 1st, 1892, signed by yourself and Chas. E. Snider. I also find that a trust deed was given by you to J. B. Glasser, Trustee for the bank, dated Aug. 20th, 1891, and a note of the Snider Stone & Lime Co. for \$17,500, also dated Aug. 20th, 1891, for which the Trust Deed was given.

(Meaning the trust deed I gave on my Grand Caverns land.)

The above amounts seem to have been a total loss to my Manitou bank, and naturally I have felt that I did not receive fair treatment by your brothers and yourself, particularly as the former have for a number of years received large returns from the Cave of the Winds, and were morally bound to indemnify me, in part at least, but have never shown any inclination to do so.

You also seem to have been unkindly and unjustly treated by them, but in the absence of any evidence outside of your letter, I am unable to give an intelligent opinion.

However, I wish to extend my earnest sympathy, and hope you will yet receive from your brothers the justice to which you seem to be so largely entitled. I wish that I were able to render you some assistance, but deeply regret that I am unable to do so.

Yours very truly,

J. B. Wheeler.

Knowing as I did that the amounts mentioned in the above letter were not all that Mr. Wheeler had helped us to when we were building up the stone and lime business, I wrote him again requesting a more careful search. In reply I received the following:

Manitou, Colo., Feb. 19, 1915.

Mr. Geo. W. Snider,
3546 Temple St.
Los Angeles, Cal.

Dear Sir:

I regret delay in replying to yours of 26th ult. The only notes I find in addition to the ones sent you is one of the Snider Stone & Lime Co., dated April 11th, 1892, for \$5,000, and one by W. H. Snider dated July 10th, 1899, for \$6,853.95. Does O. P. Snider figure in the above companies in any way, and is he inclined to be friendly with you? I remain,

Yours very truly,
J. B. Wheeler.

As Mr. Wheeler says, he has never in any way been reimbursed for these loans, and I think it hardly necessary for me to add that in taking my property away from me, my brothers have forever put it beyond my power to make restitution.

With this I bring my narrative to a close. I offer no apology for thus raking over old scandals, and exposing the inmost secrets of our family life. There are some wrongs that cannot be condoned, wrongs that cry out for redress, tho there be no redress.

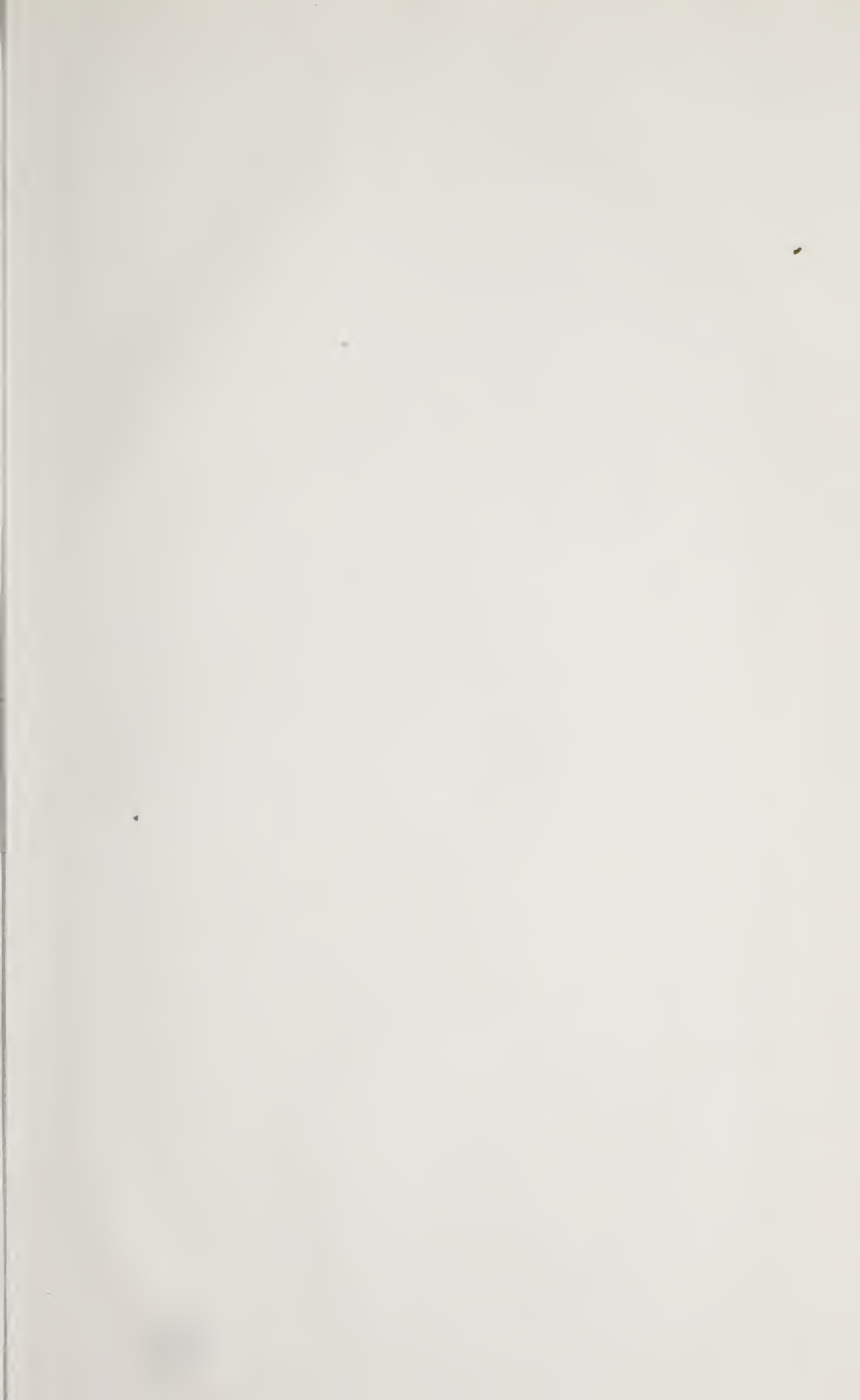
Here you have the picture of my brother Perry, smug and complacent in the position he has forged for himself at the expense of others; reveling in the wealth that has flowed uninterruptedly into his coffers, and enjoying the esteem of that public whose admiration he so avidly craves, and for the obtaining of which he has perjured his very soul.

On the other hand you have the picture of the man who was the victim of this long chain of underhanded plotting; broken in health, exiled from his home, and reduced to a state of penury that at times made necessary an appeal to charity for the barest necessities of life.

Time has brought about some changes in these contrasting relations. As one of the heirs to the estate left by my parents, I am supposed to share equally now with the rest of my brothers in the revenue derived from property originally and inherently my own.

It is an amazing thing that of all the wealth-producing property that has passed thru my brothers' hands since coming to Colorado, there should remain today as the family's chief asset, the identical piece of property that thru my efforts was the means of bringing them all out here—the lodestone that lured them on, the wonderful Cave of the Winds, the Pride of Manitou.

GEO. W. SNIDER,
3546 Temple St,
Los Angeles, Cal.





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